



Richard Hall,
1754.

Lett^r. 31.

98 v, fresh acting & sin (55)

Letter 6. Very fine.

pg 8, Ex.

pg 41 & on Ex.

60 If thou art lost

77 Promises.

79.

Letter 14 Sweet new Birth.

109 Glory of that State.

128. 127.

Division

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Lett^r. 24

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Letter 28 Ex.

Section

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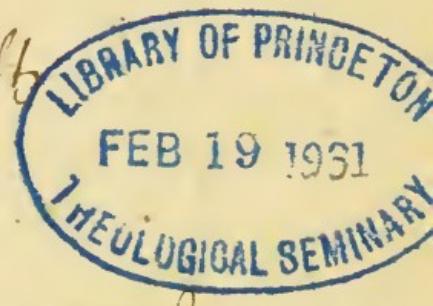
Letter 29 Ex. Blasphemous thoughts.

129

171 presence;

197 innumerable sins.

225. 227.



LETTERS
ON
Spiritual Subjects,
AND
DIVERS OCCASIONS;
SENT TO
RELATIONS and FRIENDS.

*By One who has tasted that the LORD is
Gracious.*

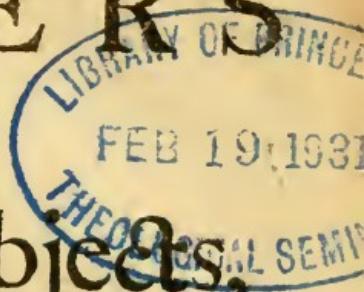
Mrs. Anne Dutton



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THE
AUTHOR's EPISTLE
TO

The Persons to whom the following LETTERS were wrote.

My dear Friends,

*A*S many of you have testify'd your kind Acceptance of these Tokens of my Love, when they were wrote to you, and that the Lord was pleas'd to make them of Use to your Souls ; so I doubt not your Acceptance of them, now they are presented to you in Print. Especially since, together with those which were wrote to any One of you in particular, there are several more which were wrote to other Friends, which are here presented to your View, which otherwise you might not have seen.

And as to those of my Friends, to whom I have wrote Letters, which are not inserted in this little Tract ; I intreat that they will not take it as a Mark of Disrespect, that their Letters were not plac'd among the rest. For, of many of the Letters which I have wrote, I kept no Copies ; and those Copies which I did preserve, which are still in my Hands, were too many to be inserted in this Book,

Book, if it had been twice as large as it is : So that as to them, God only knows whether they'll ever see publick Light.

Perhaps some may think, that if any of my Letters were Printed, it wou'd have been more proper to have had them done after my Decease ; and of this Mind I had us'd to be myself. But as others have thought, that if they were publish'd now, they might be of present Use, and have therefore desir'd the same, unto which I have consented ; I hope none will be offended, that they are done while I am living ; since, for that reason, I have entirely conceal'd my Name. And I well know, that all that is valuable in them, is from the Lord ; and that all the Imperfection that is in them, is mine. But if God will ordain Strength to any of his Children, by the Lispings of so weak a Babe ; as it will be my Joy, so He shall have all the Praise.

And therefore, as to these Letters which are now extant, if God hereby may be glorify'd, and his People reap any Advantage ; I shall have my End in their Publication. And for this, I intreat you all, that are my Friends, to help, by your Prayers, your Friend that loves you in the Bowels of JESUS CHRIST.

LETTERS

ON

Spiritual Subjects, &c.

LETTER I.

To Mr. W. and E. C.

Dear Brother and Sister,

MAY the Peace of God that passeth all Understanding, keep your Heart and Mind thro' Christ Jesus!

I am exceeding glad that you are helpt to bear your Loss patiently ; believing that the Lord will do you good by it. Our dear Father, never takes any good Thing from us, but in order to give something better. He has taken away your Pebbles, to give you Pearls ; Empty'd you of Riches in Shew, to fill you with True Riches, and Never-failing Substance. Bless him therefore, for Taking as well as Giving. His Love cast the Lot this Way ; Believe it, and you'll like it well. A little Grace is better than much Gold. You will be

great Gainers by your Loss, if the Lord give you submission to his sovereign Dispose under it, Acquiescence with his good Pleasure in it, and a further Acquaintance with Himself, as your everlasting ALL by it. Mr. Rutherford calls the World, "The Clay-portion of Bastards; not the Inheritance of Children." 'Tis a great Thing for a Saint that is rich in this World, to be thoroughly sensible of its Nothingness; and to live beside his outward Enjoyments, upon that Infinite, Inexhaustible Fullness he has in God. The Creatures stand as a Blind between us and Him. And God loves his Children so, that he calls for our Hearts; and rather than want 'em, he'll strike the Creatures dead, that Himself, the Life of all our Joys, might be exceedingly endear'd to us. He'll dry up the Streams of Creature-comforts, that our thirsty Souls may learn to drink their Fill at the Fountain-Head. And so great is his Grace, that it pleaseth him well, to see his Children come to his Bosom for all they want, when starv'd out of Creature-Supplies! Oh what Fools are we to catch at Shadows, and let go the Substance, the Sum and Quintessence of all our Bliss! Oh how happy should we be, if infinite Sweetness did

did always ravish our Souls, and unheart us from all the Creatures ! Oh, the Crystal Streams, which proceed out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb, how sweet are they at the Well-Head ! What a pure River of Water of Life should we swim in if we always liv'd in God ! This will be our Life in Heaven, to the utmost Perfection ; and happy they, who are aspiring after the rising Glory, and highest Degree of it here on Earth !

The Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort, fill you with all Joy and Peace in Believing !

I am Yours in Christ for ever, &c.

L E T T E R II.

To Mr. W. and E. C.

Dear Brother and Sister,

As to my Health, Blessed be God, I am not worse than I was when Brother was here. I dwell in a crasy Tabernacle, which I think, sometimes, is near its Dissolution. But I rejoice in that *House*, that *Building of God, Eternal in the Heavens*, which I know, thro' Grace, is prepar'd for me. I in this Tabernacle

groan, being burdened, by reason of that Sinfulness, and Weakness which attends, and renders me incapable either to know or serve the Lord as I would, and as perfect Spirits do : and this makes me long for the Time when *Mortality shall be swallowed up of Life.* We have no reason to be afraid of a separate State ; for *Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord,* Rev. xiv. 13. Nor yet should the Saints be afraid to die ; as if they should be forsaken, and left to go thro' the last Trial alone. No, our God will be with us when we come to the River Death ; he will divide the Water before us, and so marvellously appear in carrying us thro' it, that we shall take thence a Memorial of his Infinite Grace and Faithfulness ; as the Children of *Israel* did when they passed thro' the literal *Jordan*, Josh. iv. 7. We should come up from the Wilderness, even to the last Step of it, leaning upon our Beloved ; who hath said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,* Heb. xiii. 5. This Word, *Never Leave thee*, reacheth thro' our whole Lives, even unto Death ; yea, into Death, thro' Death, above and beyond Death, even to an endless Eternity. And unless everlasting Arms could wax weary, unchangeable Love alter, and Infinite Faithfulness fail,

fail, we have no reason to be afraid ; No, not in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, Psa. xxiii. 4. Our God will be our Refuge and Strength, a very present Help in that Time of Trouble, Psa. xlvi. 1. And as he will be the Strength of our Heart, when Heart and Flesh fail us, so, our Portion for ever, or our eternal Lot. And oh, who can count up a thousandth part of those vast Treasures of Glory we have in his immense BEING, as he has made over his Great SELF to us in Christ ! Why should we then, that are the King's Sons, be lean from Day to Day ? The Lord grant us true Greatness of Mind, that with a Princely Spirit, we may behave as Heirs of Glory under all our present Trials !

Wishing all Prosperity, and begging a Share in your Prayers, I commit you to Israel's Keeper, and rest,

With dear Love, Yours in the Lord, &c.

L E T T E R III.

To Mr. W. and E. C.

Dear Brother and Sister,

G Race and Peace from God our Father, G and from Jesus Christ our Lord, be multiply'd unto you.

I am persuaded, that the Lord is doing you great Good by the great Exercises you meet with. *As many as the Lord loves, he rebukes and chastens.* The Lord help you to believe, that all your Trials are so many fresh Tokens of that boundless Love, which is in his Heart towards you ; and to receive them from his Hand accordingly, with Submission, Patience, Cheerfulness and Thankfulness ! Your light *Affliction*, which is *but for a Moment*, worketh for you a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory ; while you look not at the Things which are seen, which are temporal, but at the Things which are not seen, which are eternal. Patience is a perfecting Grace : and we are exhorted to let Patience have its perfect Work, that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing, Jam. i. 4. When the Saints, (as one well says) have learn'd to bear a Cross, they shall wear a Crown. Our dear Lord Jesus, tho' he were a Son, (such a Son !) yet he learned Obedience by the Things which he suffered. And the Members must be conform'd to their Head, in Sufferings, as well as in Glory, to meeten 'em for their Inheritance, and prepare 'em for their Crown. Let us reckon then, that all our Time-Trials, (as they flow from God's Love, thro' the Blood of Christ, and are

are under the sanctifying Influences of the Holy Ghost) to be greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt, or this dark World.

And now, That you both may be strengthened with all Might, according to God's glorious Power, unto all Patience, and Long-suffering with Joyfulness, is the earnest Desire of

Yours, &c.

L E T T E R IV.

To Mr. H. T.

Dear Sir,

My beloved Brother in Christ,

IT is upon my Heart to write a few Lines to you, to beseech you, in the Bowels of Jesus Christ, and by all that Love and Grace which has been display'd in your Salvation, that you walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith you are called. Oh, remember, *That in Time past*, you was a *Gentile in the Flesh*. And at that Time, you was a *Stranger to God*, and an *Enemy in your Mind*, by reason of *wicked Works*. That then, being under the Government of the Prince of *Darkness*, you had your Conversation among the *Children of Disobedience*,

dience, walking according to the Course of this World, fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh and of the Mind ; and was by Nature a Child of Wrath, even as others. And, oh, what did Free-Grace, and boundless Mercy do for you in that Day ! When the Lord pass'd by you, and saw you polluted in your own Blood, dead in Sins, and said unto you, *Live !* Surely, your Time, That Time, was a Time of LOVE ! What Sins did Free-Grace forgive ! What Provocations did it pass by ! How thoroughly did it Wash, Purify, and Beautify your Soul ! What a glorious Robe of Righteousness did it cast over you ! How richly did it anoint you with the Oil of Gladness, the Spirit of Grace, as a Sanctifier and Comforter ! And in a Word, what a rich Crown of Loving Kindness did it set upon your Head ! So that you was exceeding-beautiful, and did prosper into a Kingdom ; being made by Jesus Christ, a King, and a Priest unto God and His Father !

And now, what think you do you owe to Free-Grace ! Is it not worthy to be glorify'd by your whole Spirit, Soul and Body ? When you was first espoused to Christ, did you not give him your whole Self ? Did you not count him worthy of all Love, Duty, and Glory ? Did you not

Then

Then like his *Kingly*, as well as his *Priestly* Office ? and count Obedience to his Scepter your high Privilege, as well as Forgiveness of Sins thro' his Blood ? And is your Mind alter'd now ? Do you think Jesus Christ is less worthy of your Love, Duty, and Glory now, than he was Then ? Is he less excellent in Himself ? or in any of his Glorious Offices ? Or is all his Excellency, Love and Grace to you, of little worth ? of no Force to constrain you to live to Him ? Oh, my dear Brother, what an abominable, hateful Thing is Sin ! What a Dishonour doth it cast upon, and how contrary is it to God, Father, Son, and Spirit ! How doth it slight and thwart the Design of the Father's Love, which was to make us perfectly holy ! How doth it condemn the Grace of Christ, and contradict the End of his Death, which was to purify unto Himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works ! And how doth it slight and thwart the gracious Design of the Holy Spirit, who has taken Possession of our Souls, to work us up into a full Conformity to Christ, our holy Head ! and how, by Sin, do we grieve him ! *Depart from us, we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways*, is the Language of every Sin to each of the Three Persons in the glorious Godhead.

By

By every Act of Sin, we do as it were, renounce our Allegiance to God in Christ, and to Him, as *Sion's King*; and, as far as in us lies, put ourselves afresh under the Dominion of *Satan*; preferring the Prince of Darkness, and his hellish Dictates, before the Prince of Light, and the glorious Teachings of his Word and Spirit! Oh, horrid!

And as for ourselves, Oh, what a Soul-destroying Thing is Sin! Every Sin is a Step taken back towards *Egypt's Land*; towards that Nature-Darkness, and Bondage, from which Free-Grace, boundless Mercy, and Almighty Power set us free. 'Tis making a *Captain* to return into *Egypt*; loathing the heavenly *Manna*, and longing after the *Flesh-pots*, the *Onions* and *Garlick*, the abominable Fare we once fed on, while in the Kingdom of *Satan*, when we *drank Iniquity like Water*. It brings Death upon our Comforts, Fruitfulness, and Usefulness in the World: for *if we live after the Flesh, we shall die*. By Sin, we lose our Opportunities of glorifying God upon the Earth; and so, that Praise, Honour, and Glory we should otherwise receive in the Day of Christ. Yea, as by Sin we dis-honour God, and abide not in Christ; so we shall be ashamed before Him at his coming.

coming. If we should be sav'd at last ; yet how sad will it be to lose all our Works ? For that fiery *Day* will try all the Works of God's dear Children. *If any Man's Work abide, he shall receive a Reward : If any Man's Work be burnt, he shall suffer Loss : But he himself (upon the bottom of Sovereign Grace) shall be saved, yet so as by Fire ; or as a Person just escapes, with his Life, the Violence of the Flames, and has all his Goods consumed.* 1 Cor. iii. 13, &c. This is our *Seeds-time*, and every Thought, Word and Action, may fitly be compar'd to *sowing of Seed*. And he that soweth to his *Flesh*, shall of the *Flesh* reap *Corruption* ; but he that soweth to the *Spirit*, shall of the *Spirit* reap *Life Everlasting* ; or that incorruptible *Crown of Glory*, for which the Apostle says, He, and the Saints ran their Christian-Race, Gal. vi. 8. 1 Cor. ix. 25.

Upon the whole, my dear Brother, have you been joined to *Idols* ? Oh say, *What have I to do any more with them ?* Have you turned away from the Lord ? Oh return unto *Him* again ! For he is *Merciful* and *Gracious*, and will not cause his *Anger* to fall upon you. He'll have *Mercy* upon you, and abundantly *pardon*. *If we confess our Sins,* (over the Head of the great

great Sacrifice, looking by Faith afresh upon Christ, who once bare them *in his own Body on the Tree*) he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness.

And as a Means to make you hate Sin, and strengthen you against it, look upon it oft thro' the Glass of a crucify'd Jesus. Bring it, by Faith, to the Cross of Christ, and see if there is not Virtue enough in the Blood of your crucified Saviour, to *crucify the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts*. And whenever you find your Heart inclined to any Evil, think thus; What did my dear Lord once bear for my Sin? Can I love that, which was so hateful, and lothsom unto Him? Can I take Pleasure in That, which fill his bitter Cup? Can I take Sin by the Hand, and thereby take up a Sword as it were to wound and pierce my Lord afresh? Have I not pierc'd him enough already? Can I not be contented without plucking the Crown from his Head, who dy'd to crown me? I intreat you to think thus; yea, I charge you in the Name of the Lord, to put these *Q*uestions to your Soul, in an *Hour of Temptation*. And if they will not move you; you may be sure, that your Soul is in sad Case, and greatly *harden'd thro' the Deceitfulness* of

of Sin. And every fresh Act of Sin will harden your Heart more and more, and make you less capable to resist Temptations; until, perhaps, you provoke the Lord to give you up to the Power of Sin and Satan, in such a Manner, as at present you little think of ; and also to bring a severe Rod upon you by his own Hand. Believe it, that finning against God will be *Bitterness* in the End. And Sins against Light and Love are the most presumptuous, and of the deepest Dye. Again, as a Means to keep your Heart in a holy Bent against Sin, be frequent in secret Prayer, ejaculatory, at least ; ask Help of God ; try this Weapon of All-Prayer. And read and meditate on God's Word. If we were diligent in the Use of Means, to keep our Hearts in an holy Frame, we should not be so apt to fall in with Temptations as we are. If we were fill'd with the Spirit of Grace, the Life and *Sap* of our holy Root, we should be like green Wood, not apt to take Fire. But it is our Dryness, because we abide not in Christ by Faith, that ruins us. Once more, another Means I intreat you to make Use of, is, Watchfulness. Watch the first Motions of Sin, and kill 'em in the Bud. Beware likewise, that you go not to the *String's-End*, as it were ; that you go
not

not to the utmost of that Liberty you think you may have, and yet keep from the Act of Sin. Dallying with Temptations, is entering into them. Converse with Satan is the ready Way to be overcome. If we wou'd not yield to any Act of Sin ; let's beware that we yield not to a pleasing Thought about it.

And now, That the Grace of Christ may be sufficient for you, and his Strength made perfect in your Weakness, is the earnest Desire of,

Sir, Yours in the Lord, &c.

L E T T E R V.

To R. K.

Dear Sister in our Precious Jesus,

LEST you should question my Love, tho' in Haste, I wou'd write a few Lines. We have had many sweet Feasts with our Beloved in the Wilderness : But the richest Provisions, and the best Wine are reserved till the last ; and the Marriage-Supper hastens. The Lord grant you may grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of Christ ! Oh, how little have we seen of his transcendent Beauty ! We have beheld so much of his Glory, as to make him *the chiefest of Ten Thousand* in our Esteem : But

But there is enough in him to fill Men and Angels with new Wonder to all Eternity ! Christ's Riches, are absolutely unsearchable ; a Mine that we can never bottom to Eternity ! We shall see more and more of his Glory, as we pass on towards Perfection ; and Oh, the wonderful Grace that is to be brought unto us at our Lord's next Appearing, which, in a Way of Eminence, will be *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* ! The Views of his Glory, which we have had here, tho' true and real, yet are so small, that if compar'd with what we shall have then, it will be as if we had never seen him ; and as if he was but then reveal'd to us. We shall be so ravish'd with the Views of his Glory, that we shall never be able to look off his bright Face for ever.

I am Yours in Christ, &c.

L E T T E R VI.

To Mrs. E. B.

Much honour'd and beloved Sister,

Grace and Peace be multiply'd unto you, thro' the Knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

Yours

Yours I received, and return you abundant Thanks for your great Kindness shewn towards us, and unto me, who am the most unworthy, *and less than the least of all Christ's.* And none of your Kindness shewn towards my dear Lord, in the weakest of his Members, shall be unrewarded at his next Appearing.

If you smelt any Fragrancy on us, it was Christ's Sweetness cast upon us that delighted your spiritual Sense. And if *Unction from the holy One,* a Drop of that holy Oil cast upon a Creature, be so fragrant ; what must the immeasurable Fulness of the Lord's Anointed, the Christ of God, be ! *For God giveth not the Spirit by Measure unto Him.* Oh the transcendent Fragrancy of our Beloved ! *The Smell of His Garments* delight the Saints, both in the upper and lower Worlds. There are little Sparks of Beauty and Excellency scatter'd up and down in the Creatures ; especially among *the Saints, the Excellent of the Earth,* as new Creatures : but all Beauties, in their flaming Glories, are summed up, and radiantly shine in the Person of Christ, as God-Man ! There is in Christ, not only the Beauty of the whole Creation, but even uncreated Beauty itself. What's all the Beauty of the Creatures, of Men and Angels,

gels, in both Worlds, if compar'd to his ; in whom the *Fulness of the Godhead dwelleth Bodily !* None in the Heavens can be compared unto the LORD, none among the Sons of the Mighty can be likened unto the LORD ; the LORD, the Mediator. No , the Heavens praise him as God's WONDER ! *Psal.* lxxxix. 5, 6. The glorious Hosts of Saints and Angels above, under the surprizing and increasing Displays of his Glory, eternally adore that un-created Beauty and Brightness which shines forth in our exalted Jesus ! The crowned Saints *cast down their Crowns* before his Throne, and shrink to nothing, as it were, in themselves, before the Displays of his infinite Majesty, Love, and Grace ! *Rev.* iv. 20. The whole Host of Seraphims, Angels, and Archangels, *vail their Faces, and cover their Feet*, as unworthy to stand in his Presence, or to look on the resplendent Brightness of his unsearchable Glory ; as the *Train* of divine Perfections *fills the Temple* of his glorified human Nature ! *I/a.* vi. 1, 2. And as for the Saints below, when favour'd with the least Glimpse of his Glory, he is the *chiefest of ten Thousand* in their Esteem, and *altogether lovely !* They have *none in Heaven* but him, nor upon *the Earth* that they *desire* besides him, or in comparison with him. *Song* v. 10, 16. *Psa.* lxxv. 25. Oh how

how happy, are those Souls who have an Interest in this great Lord Jesus! and are blest with the transforming Shine of his inconceivable Glory! Oh, what Folly are we guilty of, when we forsake this *Fountain of living Waters*, and *bew out to ourselves broken Cisterns that can hold no Water!* Jer. ii. 13. When we forsake the infinite Fulness of Christ, and seek Contentment in Creatures, and Creature-Excellencies! *The Way of Life is above to the Wise*: Prov. xv. 24. The Way of Faith, by which Life is possest and enjoy'd, is, to live out of ourselves, upon the Christ of God, in all his infinite Fulness and Fitness to save Sinners, from the Depths of Misery, to the Height of Glory.

Dear Sister, you say, “ That I will not allow you to put Ifs, concerning your Interest in the Lord Jesus.” But if I would not; it is not for Want of Bowels towards you, nor Sympathy with you in all your Soul-Distresses. No, I can say, thro’ Grace, that, in the Bowels of my dear Lord Jesus, I have a compassionate Tenderness towards all his suffering Members; and, in an especial Manner, an inward Fellow-feeling with the Lambs of his Flock, under all their Harassings by the roaring Lion: and glad, exceeding glad should

should I be, if by any Means, I might be made helpful to 'em in the Combat. But having seen somewhat of that Dishonour Unbelief brings unto God, and found what Discomfort it has brought to my own Soul ; I would exhort my dear Brethren and Sisters, to take God at his Word, as to their eternal Salvation, in looking unto Jesus ; and to hold fast the Confidence of their eternal Security, in the Face of ten Thousand Difficulties, and seeming Contrarieties, merely upon the Word and Oath of a God that cannot lie : who has laid himself under such Engagements, on purpose that *the Heirs of Promise might have strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge to lay hold upon the Hope set before 'em.* Heb. vi. 18. The Lord, would not only have us to be safe, but to know our Safety, in fleeing to his dear Son for Life. And when the Saints exhort one another to *hold fast the Beginning of their Confidence stedfast unto the End* ; their Design herein, is, that God might have the Glory, and they the Comfort of of this great Salvation. Nor are such Exhortations in vain : The Lord often blesseth them, as a Means, to encourage his dear Children in the *good Fight of Faith.* And I am perswaded, that God's fearful-hearted Ones would not so often speak the Language

guage of Unbelief, if they did consider, what great Dishonour it casts upon God, in each of the three glorious Persons, as they have been, and are jointly engag'd in the Work of our Salvation ; and likewise, how much they weaken their own Hands thereby. A few Thoughts, and Words of Faith, in a Time of Darkness, brings more Honour unto God, and Comfort to the Soul, than we are aware of. A Believer, by every Act of Faith, doth as it were afresh *set to his Seal that God is true* ; and likewise *enters into Rest.* John iii. 33. Heb. iv. 3. Every Act of Faith brings present Honour to God, and Rest to the Soul. And, as Acts strengthen Habits ; so every Act of Faith strengthens the Habit of Faith, and tends to weaken and subdue the Power of Unbelief. Whereas, by yielding to Unbelief, we give God the Lie, and weaken our own Hands : We thereby render ourselves more uncapable to fight it out in Faith, against the Powers of Darkness. We are exhorted to *take unto us the whole Armour of God*, that so we may be able to *withstand in the evil Day, and having done all to stand.* Eph. vi. 13. 'Tis always an evil Day with God's Children, when they are assaulted about their Interest in the Lord Jesus : And if we have

have not then this Piece of Armour, the Helmet, on our Heads, the Hope of Salvation, (the objective Hope of Salvation, or the Ground we have of Hope of Salvation) the Enemy will wound us exceedingly.

As to the various Temptations, Darkness, and the Power of Unbelief, you are exercis'd with ; *the same Afflictions are accomplish'd in your Brethren that are in the World.* The Children of God are all try'd in these respects, more or les. And 'tis well for us, that we have a sympathizing high Priest, who can have Compassion according to the Measure of our Distress ; who has been *tempted in all Points like unto us*, that from an experimental Feeling of the Power of Temptation, he might know how, in the tenderest Bowels, to succour us when tempted. Not a Sorrow pierceth our Hearts, but our dear compassionate Head feels it : And he lives in Heaven, on purpose to save us out of all our Distresses, by his Advocacy and Intercession with His and Our Father, in the Virtue of his Great Sacrifice, and in the Interest of his Great Person. So that we are exceeding safe, who have trusted our Souls in the Hands of this Jesus, with whom the Father is well pleased, and in whom his Soul delighteth ;

so that he can deny him nothing that he asks. Yea, it shall certainly be well with us ; since the Father himself loveth us ; and from thence called his own Son to this Office of High-Priest for us upon the Throne, on purpose that the glorious Fruits of his Love, in our complete Salvation, might be communicated to us, in a Way of Honour to all the divine Perfections. And as we are safe, and it is, and shall be well with us, so we have great reason to be *exceeding joyful in all our Tribulations* ; while we *fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Christ in our Flesh.* Col. i. 24. For even now, while we are Combatants, we are *more than Conquerors, thro' him that bath loved us,* Rom. viii. 37. *And if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together.* Ver. xvii. Our glorious Captain will *cover our Heads in the Day of Battle* ; and as he has overcome For us, so he will certainly overcome In, and By us : He'll give the Victory on our Side, either actively, or passively. For tho', like *Gad, a Troop may overcome us, yet we shall overcome at the last.* If Sin and Satan should give us a Foil, then our dear Lord Jesus will lead us afresh to his Death ; and so we shall overcome, passively, by the Blood of the Lamb. And then, having renewed Peace,
under

under the Sprinklings of the Blood of Jesus, our Faith shall be rais'd up again, to bear a fresh Testimony for God, against the Prince of Darkness, and all the Powers of Sin ; and so we shall overcome Actively. *Rev. xii. 11.* All the Weakness and Sin that attend us in the Conflict, forgiving Love will bury in the Depths of the Sea ; and every Act of our tried Graces, *shall be found unto Praise, Honour, and Glory at the Appearing of Jesus Christ.* And when once we get to *the City of Habitation*, the *Rest that remains* for us, we shall bless God for all his Dealings with us, and admire the Conduct of wise Love, in *all the Way it led us thro' the Wilderness* ; while we see every weary Step wisely overruled to make our Rest so much the more glorious. We shall then see, that we could not have been without any, the least of all our Trials, whatsoever they be ; but God would have had less Glory, and *we* less Happiness. If we are in *Heaviness* *thro' manifold Temptations*, there's an absolute *Need* of it ; that God might have his manifestative Glory, in our Deliverance, in all those various Rays which infinite Wisdom ordain'd ; and that *We* might have that full and comprehensive Salvation, unto which we were appointed. Our suffering

State will be quickly over ; our reigning State hastens. And mean while, our *light Affliction*, which is but *for a Moment*, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. Let us then be *Followers of them, who thro' Faith and Patience, do now inherit the Promises*; reckoning the Sufferings of this present Time not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us, 2 Cor. iv. 17. Heb. vi. 12. Rom. viii. 18.

I am glad, my dear Sister, that at Times, you are favour'd with Soul-amazing Prospects of your near and high Relation unto God in Christ ; which humbles you in the Dust, before the Majesty of that Grace which shines forth herein. This is no less than Heaven begun in your Soul, a Sweet Fore-taste of that inconceivable Glory, you shall e're long have the full Possession of. A Cluster of Canaan's Grapes is brought you in the Wilderness ; that so you might know, by spiritual Sense, as well as by Faith, that the Land whither you are going, is an exceeding good Land. And what tho', at other Seasons, thro' the Power of Unbelief, you may be kept low in your Soul ; yet this makes no Change in your High Relation to God in Christ, nor in those high Privileges you have in Him.

If we believe not, and so want the Joy of God's Salvation ; yet He abideth faithful, and cannot deny Himself, in the unalterable Word and Oath which is gone out of his Mouth concerning it ; and so the Salvation itself is eternally secur'd to us. When Darkness covers us ; The Darkness and the Light are both alike to Him : and at such Times, we are especially call'd to live by Faith ; to trust in the L ORD, and stay ourselves upon our God, Isa. l. 10. He is Our God still, even when we have no Light of inward Comfort to walk by ; and are ready to be driven away with Temptations : and it is the Excellency of Faith, to trust in Jehovah, and stay itself upon him, as its own God, at such Seasons.

You can with Comfort remember the Time past, when you was enabled to crowd thro' all your own Unworthiness, and inward Corruptions, to *Touch the Hem of Christ's Garment* ; which you found to be *Healing* to your Soul. And as you have received *Christ Jesus the Lord*, so walk in him, Col. ii. 6. As we came to Christ at first, as undone Sinners in ourselves, to receive that free and full Salvation of God, prepar'd for us in Him ; even so let us come unto him all our Days under a deep, and increasing Sense of our own Emptiness,

to be continually supply'd out of his inexhaustible Fulness. Faith is a Grace ordain'd of God, to take possession of Christ, and of Eternal Life in him: And let us be assured of our Eternal Safety, having run into Christ, the City of Refuge. How much Sin soever there may be in such a Soul, there is no Condemnation to it. No, blessed be God, our State in Christ, alters not a jot, with our Frames. The Discoveries of God's Favour towards us in his Son, may vary ; but his Love, in itself, is as unchangeable as his Being. 'Tis an everlasting Round, that gloriously encloseth us from Eternity to Eternity. We are enclos'd in Grace by Father, Son, and Spirit ; set in Grace in our Enclosings, as the precious Stones in *Aaron's Breast-plate* were set in pure Gold, *Exod.* xxviii. 20. So we are set, and have an eternal Fixation, an unchangeable Standing in Grace, *Rom.* v. 2. God's Love, like the Sun in the Firmament, always keeps a steady Course, whether we behold it, or Clouds hide its Glory from our View. And so various are its Emanations, that our Sight is much too weak to take in the full Glory of its Rays. Love walks in such various Ways, such unthought-of Paths, that we are often at a loss to trace its wondrous Steps in the mighty Race

Race it runs. It will take up Eternity to admire its mysterious Circuits, in all its rich Aboundings according to the manifold Wisdom of God.

Grace be with you. Amen.

I am Yours in Christ, &c.

L E T T E R. VII.

To Mrs. M.

*Dear Sister, whom I love and honour
in the Lord,*

I Rejoice with you, for the exceeding Riches of boundless Grace extended towards you, not only in the Salvation of your Soul; but also in that Assurance of Faith you are favour'd with: and likewise, that your longing Soul, under the ripening Influences of the Sun of Righteousness, hath a *Desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.*

But yet, my dear Sister, I beseech you, *suffer that Word of Exhortation, Jam. i. 4: Let Patience have her perfect Work; that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.* Be willing to stay the Lord's Time; and fear not your losing any thing thereby. Christ comes into his *Garden to gather Lilies*, as soon as ever they are fully ripe for

his own Bosom. He will gather you in, as a *Shock of Corn in its Season*; and not let you stay in the Field too long, to your Damage. No, your stay in the World is to prepare you for Glory; that Glory, which is laid up for you, and shall shortly be put upon you.

But it may be, you will say, ‘ If I saw
 ‘ that Work go on, I should be willing to
 ‘ stay; but instead of being more prepar’d
 ‘ for Glory, I think, I am more unmeet.’

But as to this, God is the best Judge of our Meetness for Glory; as also, of the Ways, Means, and Time to meeten us. Perhaps, you may not feel such a vehement Flame of Love, Joy, and Zeal as you was wont; and yet your Faith, Humility, and Patience may be greater. There’s a Variety of Graces, in the Souls of the Saints; and each must have its Exercise, and proper Time of Trial.

If you have not now such Manifestations of Divine Favour, to the inflaming of your Love; yet it may be you may glorify God more, by believing in the Dark, by trusting in him when he seems to slay you, by cleaving to him when he seems to cast you off; as counting him both able and faithful, that hath promis’d, even in the

Face

Face of ten thousand Deaths and Difficulties, with which you are surrounded.

If, thro' the Lord's withdrawing his sensible Presence, and an increasing Sight of your own Corruptions, you do not shoot upwards in Spiritual Joy, as you was wont ; yet you may grow more downwards in Humility, and Self-abasement.

And tho' your Zeal, in a way of active Obedience, may want that vehement Flame it once had ; yet your Patience in passive Obedience, or your Fitness to endure a Variety of Trials, may by greater. And so you are still upon the Increase, even when you seem to decline.

And as to those very Graces, which seem to wither ; there may not be such a Decay in them as you think of. They may decay in some Respects, and yet increase in others. For tho' the Edge of your spiritual Affections, may not be so keen ; yet your Love may be more solid, and keep a more steady Course in all the Paths of Obedience ; even in the Want of those sweet Allurements, which first inticed you into the Wilderness. Your Joy may be more pure ; more in the Lord, and in what you are in him ; tho' less in Self, and spiritual Enjoyments from him. And your Zeal likewise may abound more and more

in Knowledge, and in all Judgment ; tho' the first Flashes of it may be over, which, ordinarily, are not so well regulated. And thus your personal Meetness or Preparation for Glory increaseth continually, even at those very Times, and by those very Means which seem to lessen it.

Therefore, let Patience have its perfect Work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If you was to be taken to Glory, before you had pass'd thro' the whole Course of Trials appointed for you, there would be something wanting in your Preparation for it. The Measure of your Stature in Christ, as a Member of his Body, and of that proportionable Glory which shall be put upon you, is appointed by God the Father : And the Holy Ghost, keeping this Pattern in his Eye, is now working you up into that Conformity to Christ, to which you was predestinated, by all the Changes and Trials which pass over you, both inward and outward, in order to bring you up to that full Glory reserved for you. Every Act of our tried Graces shall be found unto Praise, Honour, and Glory at the Appearing of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. i. 7. And were they to have no Trial, how could they have an Opportunity of acting ?

And

And as the Holy Ghost has taken Possession of us, to Work us up into a full Conformity to Christ, both in Holiness and Glory ; so in carrying it on, he oft works, as it were, under-ground, out of our Sight : For in infinite Depths of Wisdom, we are curiously wrought in secret ; so that our spiritual Growth, and increasing Meetness for Glory, are rather to be judg'd of in general, by Faith, taking in the Declaration of God in the Promise, *Psal. xcii. 12, &c.* than by Sense, or the present-felt Exercise of this or that single Grace.

And since our Lord first suffer'd, and then entred into his Glory, let us be willing to follow his Steps, and run with Patience the Race that is set before us ; looking unto that Eternal Weight of Glory, which our light Affliction now worketh for us. And in all our Sufferings according to the Will of God, let us commit the keeping of our Souls to him in Well-doing, as unto a Faithful Creator, who will perfect what concerns us, and not forsake the Work of his own Hands. Yea, let us value Life, with all its Trials, while it is continu'd, as a great Blessing ; and labour to improve it, as an Opportunity put into our Hands to glorify God on the Earth : And when all the Work is done upon us, and by us, that

was design'd, and we, in all respects, fully meetned for Glory, we shall not stay here a Moment longer, but be immediately loved home unto Christ, to be glorified with him for ever.

And now, that you may be *strengthned with all Might, according to his glorious Power, unto all Patience, and Long-Suffering with Joyfulness,* until you are fully made meet for, and taken up into the Possession of your Inheritance with the Saints in Light, is the earnest Desire of-

Yours in the Lord, &c.

LETTER VIII.

To a little handful of Christ Lambs at C---n E---d.

Grace and Peace be multiplied unto you, from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, by the Blessed Comforter.

Dear Friends, I long after you all in the Bowels of Jesus Christ, that your Hearts might be comforted, your Hope increased, and your Faith establish'd upon Him, *the Rock of Ages.* And having but little Time to speak with you Face to Face, when I

was

was last with you, I was desirous to have a little Converse with you by Writing. I find Sin is your great Burden, which fills you with Fears, lest you should one Day perish. But as to this, remember that Sin, all the Sins of all that shall be saved, were once laid by God the Father upon his own dear Son. *All we, like Sheep, have gone astray : we have turned every one to his own Way, and the LORD hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all,* Isa. liii. 6. And as God the Father made all our iniquities at once to meet upon Him, the spotless Lamb of his own providing, and wounded Him for our Transgressions ; so Christ bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree, and gave up himself a Sacrifice in our Room and Stead ; by which he has put away Sin, and for ever made an End of it, 1 Pet. ii. 24. Heb. ix. 26. And as he has destroy'd Sin in himself, and given us a compleat Victory over it in Him ; so he will e'er long destroy it in us perfectly, by the Power of his Holy Spirit, in the Virtue of his God-like Blood. Our Old Man was crucified with Christ, that the Body of Sin might be destroy'd, Rom. vi. 6. Sin is condemn'd to die, by the dying of the Lord Jesus, and therefore shall never condemn us. No ; tho' Sin, Original and Actual, has a bounded

Bounded in such an amazing Manner, in it Guilt, Filth and Power ; yet, blessed be God, where *Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound* ; *That as Sin has reigned unto Death, even so Grace might reign thro' Righteousness unto Eternal Life, by Jesus Christ our Lord,* Rom. v. 20, 21.

How did Sin [abound,] even our Sin, in *Adam's first Transgression* ? How has it abounded in that universal Corruption of Nature, which has overspread the Elect of God, as well as others, as Descendants from fallen *Adam* ? And how has it abounded in all those filthy Streams which this filthy Fountain has been sending forth in all Ages, in Thoughts, Words, and Ways, even in the Chosen of God themselves ? How far are the Aboundings of Sin, in those respects, beyond the Comprehension of any Creature !

And yet, *Where Sin abounded, Grace did [much more] abound* : When the LORD, the Father, took our Sins, the Sins of the whole Elect, and bundled 'em up, as it were, into one Iniquity, which he laid upon his dear Son ; who being an infinite Person, was well able to bear all that inconceivable Wrath, which a Sin-revenging God pour'd out upon him, as the due Desert thereof. By which he made a full Satisfaction.

Satisfaction to injur'd Justice, and an everlasting Peace between God and us ; reconciling all the Divine Perfections, which gloriously harmonize in the Salvation of Sinners by the Blood of his Cross ; and reconciling us too, in the Body of his Flesh thro' Death, when he gave himself a Sacrifice in our Stead. Whereupon God, as *the God of Peace*, did bring him *again from the Dead*, or raise him up from under all that Guilt, Curse, Wrath and Death he bore for us ; and thereby, at once, did openly acquit and discharge him, as a publick Person in our room ; and also freely, fully, and eternally forgive us all our Trespasses, and raise us up to endless Life and Glory in him, our great Representative. Thus Grace did much more abound. Grace was not only a Match for Sin, and so could not be overcome by it ; but it was stronger, infinitely stronger than Sin, and so overcame it, even to a compleat and eternal Victory. Yea, Grace did much more abound, not only to an utter Destruction of Sin, in its Reign unto Death ; but further also, in bestowing upon us such Life and Glory in Christ, as the Fruit of his Death, which is far superior unto that we had in *Adam*. Oh, the Super-aboundings of Grace ! This [much

[much more] who can search the Dimensions of it !

And Grace [did] much more abound : 'Tis put in the past Sense, to shew both the Earliness of it, and also the Foundation of its After-display in Christ, and glorious Reign thro' him. Oh the Earliness of this Grace ! How did it super-abound in the everlasting Purposes, Counsels, and Covenant of the Three-One God, over all the Aboundings of Sin, fore-view'd even before Time commenc'd ! And this was the Foundation of that bright Display which was made of it in the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. And how did Grace, the Grace of all the Three Persons in God, super-abound, when Jesus died for our Sins, and was rais'd again for our Justification, and set down at God's right Hand, as our Representative and Forerunner ! For Father, Son, and Spirit, had an equal Hand in these Wonders of super-abounding Grace. The Father laid Sin upon his own Son, and pour'd out upon him all his Wrath ; the Son bare and endur'd the same ; and the Holy Spirit, by his Almighty Influence, enabled Christ, as Man, to *endure the Cross, and despise the Shame, for the Joy he set before him.* And all the Three, in boundless Grace to us, were jointly

jointly concern'd in Christ's Resurrection, and Ascension to Glory, as our Head and Representative. And thus Grace [did] much more abound, [in] Christ, as the Foundation of its glorious Reign by him.

Grace did much more abound ; that as Sin has reigned unto Death, even so Grace [might] reign thro' Righteousness unto eternal Life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Sin has reigned in its Guilt, Filth and Power : It has reigned unto Death, unto bodily Death, unto Soul-Death, unto Time-Death, and Eternal Death, which, as *the Wages of Sin*, is the due Desert of every Sinner. But *Grace reigns unto [Life]*, thro' [Righteousness] ; the Righteousness of Christ, or his compleat Obedience, both active and passive ; and so, according to the Righteousness of Jehovah's pure Nature, and his holy Law : And it reigns [by] Jesus Christ, the Anointed Saviour, as our Lord. Thus Grace reigns unto Life ; Life of Justification, Sanctification, Consolation, and Glorification, and in all, unto Eternal Life ; partial and initial in this World, and compleat and total in the World to come.

Well then, dear Souls, what's become of Sin ? Oh, look to Christ, once crucify'd, and there see Sin compleatly finish'd.

nish'd in him, with all its woful Effects, and for ever made an end of. Yea, see in a risen and glorified Jesus, what full, transcendent, unchangeable and eternal Life and Glory, God's super-abounding Grace has bestow'd upon you in him ! Here's a Foundation laid, that is every way large enough to bear all that vast Superstructure of our personal Salvation, from all Misery, unto all Glory, which one Day shall be laid upon it, when the whole Elect, being compleatly sav'd, both mystically and personally, in, and thro' Christ, shall for ever, *with Shoutings, cry, Grace, Grace unto it!* Lift up your Heads therefore, and be not afraid of the Condemnation of Sin : It once reigned unto Death in Christ for you, when he died in your Stead ; and even so, Grace shall reign, by him, unto Eternal Life, in your compleat Salvation. Sin, in its Guilt, shall not destroy you : *for there is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus,* Rom. viii. 1. Sin, in its Filth, shall not make you lothsome in the Sight of God : *for the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all Sin,* 1 John i. 7. Sin, in its Power, shall not have Dominion over you ; *for you're not under the Law, but under Grace,* Rom. vi. 14. And Sin, in its Being, shall not always abide in you neither ;

ther ; your Heaven-born Souls shall not be always vexed with the Being of this hateful Thing, Sin : For your *Spirits*, at the Moment of Death, shall be made perfect in Holiness, *Heb.* xii. 23. And there shall be no Defilement, no unclean Thing, either in your Bodies or Souls, when you enter into the *new Jerusalem*, *Rev.* xxi. 27. You shall then be unblameable in Holiness, before God in Love, *Eph.* i. 4. Thus gloriously will Grace reign unto [Life], over all that Sin and Death that works in you. And be not cast down, because you have no Worthiness : For it is [Grace] that reigns, free Grace, that seeks none of the Creature's Goodness to be a Motive of its Reign. Be not discouraged by the Strength of your Soul-Enemies ; for it is [reigning] Grace, all-conquering Grace, that is infinitely able to subdue all the Opposition it meets with. And let not your own Unrighteousness hinder your Faith and Joy in this Grace : For it reigns thro' the Righteousness of another ; thro' Christ's [Righteousness], not your own. And tho' you have no Strength of yourselves to do any thing for your own Defence and Safety, or for God's Glory ; yet this Grace will do all for you, as it reigns by Jesus Christ our Lord. By [Christ], not.

not yourselves : The whole of your Salvation is committed into Christ's Hand, not your own. And Grace reigns by Christ, as [Jesus], a Saviour, that is infinitely able to save to the uttermost ; and by him also, as [Christ], the Anointed of the Father, a Saviour in Office, that is authoriz'd and appointed of God to work out all that Salvation for his People, which Free-Grace bestows. And it reigns also by Jesus Christ, as [LORD] over all Creatures, and Things in Heaven, Earth and Hell ; and by him also, as [Our] Lord, our Head, our Husband ; one in the nearest Relation to us : Whose Love engageth his Power, as well as his Faithfulness ; who exerciseth his Kingly Authority over all Things, in an especial manner for the Good of his Church ; breaking his Enemies with his Rod of Iron ; and defending, and governing his People by the sweet and powerful Scepter of his Grace, whereby he is *able to subdue even all Things unto himself.* What are all our Enemies ? Men, Sin, Satan, Death and the Grave ? Tho' like mighty Mountains, before our Zerubbabel they shall become a *Plain* : *And he shall bring forth the Head-Stone of our Salvation,* by the same Free-Grace that laid its Foundation, to the endless Wonder of Men
and

and Angels, and the eternal Glory of the Three-one God.; the exceeding Riches of whose Grace will shine forth herein, to the innumerable Ages of a glorious Eternity!

But after all, it may be, you will say, ‘ These are glorious Privileges for those who are interested in ’em ; but how shall we know that they belong to us ?

In answer to this, consider, that the Persons, over whom Sin shall not have Dominion, either in its Guilt, Filth, Power, or Being, are such, all such, and none but such, that are, not under the Law, but under Grace. All that ever shall be saved, have been, are, or shall be brought from under the Law, to submit to the Reign of Grace.

And those Persons are under the Law, (in the Sense I here intend it) who like and approve of the Old Covenant, as it makes Doing the Condition of Life ; and accordingly, they cleave to the Works of their own Hands, and endeavour to establish their own Righteousness, as the Matter of their Justification before God. Tell such Souls of Jesus Christ, his Blood and Righteousness, and Free-Grace in him, is the alone Way of Salvation ; and that Faith in him, is the Means appointed of God for a poor Sinner’s Enjoyment of all
that

that Life and Glory which is bestow'd by God's Free-Grace, without the least Work, Worth, or Worthiness in the Creature ; and it is very unsavory to them. They don't like to hear of Christ's Righteousness, and God's Free-Grace in him, in the Point of Justification, to the utter Exclusion of their own Works. No, they seek Life, *as it were, by the Works of the Law* : They can't think, that what Christ has done and suffer'd, is sufficient to save them, without they do something themselves, to add unto it, or rather to be found in without it. For they like not the Obedience of the Son of God : They see no Beauty in this glorious Robe, and so reject it ; and seek to dress themselves up in the *filthy Rags* of their own Righteousnes. And as they see no Need of Christ's Righteousness, so, nor of his Strength neither ; they think, that they have Power in themselves, to do what God requires, whenever they please to exert it ; and so they like not, but reject Christ as a Root of Influence ; and bring forth all their wild Fruit, from, in, and to themselves, under the Influence, and for the End of the Old Covenant. Thus, rejecting the Saviour of God's providing, they would fain, in the Pride of their Hearts, save themselves. And as for God's
free

free Sovereign Grace in Christ, by which he saves a Sinner, without any of his own Works, their Hearts rise against it: They will not be beholding to Free-Grace for Salvation ; but seek to earn it by the Works of their own Hands. And the Souls which thus cleave to the Law, (living and dying in such a State) shall be found under it at the awful Day of Judgment ; and must then hear what it speaks unto them, in all the amazing Curses of it, and bear the Weight of that inconceivable Wrath, which is the due Desert of every Transgressor while Sin, Death, and Hell have an eternal Dominion over them. This then is the Condition, and will be the End of all those who live and die under the Law. *For by the Deeds of the Law shall no Flesh be justified in the Sight of God, Rom. iii. 20.* *For as many as are of the Works of the Law, are under the Curse, Gal. iii. 10.* *And what things soever the Law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law, Rom. iii. 19.* But then, who are they that are under Grace ?

The Persons under Grace (in the Sense I here intend) are such that are convinc'd of their own Insufficiency to save themselves, and of Christ's All-sufficiency to save even the very Chief of Sinners ; which draws

draws out their Souls into earnest Desires after Life and Salvation, by God's Free-Grace in him. These like and approve of the New Covenant, in which the Salvation of Sinners stands alone upon absolute Grace. These have had a Discovery of God's Holy Law, as it requires perfect and perpetual Obedience, in Heart, Lip, and Life ; and upon every Failure, curseth the Transgressor : And in the Light the Holy Ghost sets up in such a Soul, it sees its Contrariety to God, and his Holy Law, in Heart as well as Life ; it sees its own Inability to do any Duty in that perfect manner the Law of God requires ; it sees, that when it *would do Good, Evil is present with it* ; and that if God was to deal with it according to his righteous Law, it must perish for ever. And now the Soul begins to die unto the Law, or to all Hopes of Life by the Works of its own Hands. And further, to make the Soul *dead indeed to the Law*, (as a Covenant of Works) the Lord goes on to reveal his Son, in such a Soul, as having been made under the Law, to fulfil all its Requirements, and suffer all its Penalties for all that shall be saved ; whereby he becomes *the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth*, Gal. iv. 4. Rom. vii. 4. and x. 4. And

proportionable to the Revelation of Christ made to the Soul, it sees a Soul-attracting, Heart-ravishing Beauty and Excellency in him, and his Salvation ; which draws it out into earnest Desires to have him for its Portion, to be wash'd in his Blood, to be supply'd from his Fulness, and found in his Righteousness before God. Now the Soul sees, that if ever it is saved, it must be by God's Free-Grace in Christ ; and prostrates itself at the Throne of Grace, intreating Divine Mercy to be extended to it, as a miserable undone Sinner. And it is likewise convinc'd of the Necessity of Faith in Christ, that it must believe, or perish ; and accordingly, it looks unto him alone for Salvation ; it attempts to come to him, and rest its Soul upon him ; and under a felt Sense of its own Weakness, it cries out, *Lord, I believe ; help thou mine Unbelief,* Mar. ix. 24. Thus it sees a Need of Christ's Strength, as well as his Righteousness ; and is glad that the Salvation of a Sinner, from first to last, is all of one pure Piece of Grace. And tho' the Soul mayn't have full Assurance of its own Salvation, by God's Free-Grace in Christ, and so not full Joy in it ; yet it likes this Way of Salvation, and desires, above all things, to have an Interest in it. And a Glimpse of it now and then, which

It gets in a Promise, or an Ordinance, begets in it a secret Hope, and glads its Heart more than if the whole World was given it. For, when once the Soul is remov'd from an Old Covenant-bottom, if its Hope was not fixt on New Covenant-Grace in Christ, it would utterly sink into Despair. And there is such an Agreeableness between the Principle of Grace in a new-born Soul, and the Doctrine of Grace reveal'd in the Gospel; that the Soul would not part with that little Hope it has of eternal Life in Christ, for all the Treasures of the Universe. And the Souls which thus cleave to Grace, are undoubtedly under it now, and shall be found so in the Day of Christ, to their unspeakable Joy and Glory.

Well then, dear Hearts, if you have not a full Assurance of your Interest in Christ, and his Salvation; yet, if you desire him above all things, and that Free-Grace would do all for you in the Matter of Salvation, you are certainly under the Dominion of Grace. For the Desires of your Souls, cleaving to Grace, are their submitting unto its Reign. And this Grace that has begun to reign over you, will reign on, notwithstanding all the Opposition it meets with in you, even unto eternal Life; or
your

your complete Salvation from Sin and Death, to endless Life and Glory.

Grace be with you. Amen.

I am Yours in Christ, &c.

L E T T E R IX.

To Mrs. L.

Dear Friend,

I Am far from thinking it any Trouble to answer your Request, in giving you my Thoughts concerning those Scriptures which your Mind has been exercis'd about: For if I could be any way helpful to thy Soul, I should rejoice, and be exceeding glad. Take therefore the following Hints briefly.

John xii. 47. *And if any Man hear my Words, and believe not, I judge him not : for I came not to judge the World, but to save the World.* Our Lord in these Words declares, That *if any Man hear his Words*, i. e. the Doctrine which Christ, his Apostles and Ministers preach, with a natural or external Hearing only, and so believe not in a saving manner, that he judgeth him not ; that is, it was not Christ's immediate Work

in the Days of his Flesh, nor is yet, while the Gospel is preach'd, to judge and condemn Unbelievers. *For I came not to judge the World,* (says he) *but to save the World.* Our Lord's first Coming was not to Judgment, but to publish, and work out Salvation. And while the Gospel is preach'd, it is the Time of Christ's *Long-suffering*, wherein he *waits to be gracious* to poor Sinners: But when he shall appear the second Time, he'll come to Judgment; and then all those who shall be found to have liv'd and died in Unbelief, as Despisers and Rejecters of Christ, and his Salvation, shall be judged and condemned by him, with a *Depart ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

And now, methinks, this Text should be matter of Encouragement to thee, in thy present Case. Dost thou see thyself to be a poor Sinner? And art thou afraid to draw nigh to God, or lift up thine Eyes to Heaven, because thou art so vile? Yea, dost thou fear that thou art yet in a State of Unbelief, that thou hast never yet put forth one Act of Faith upon Christ? Why, he did not come to condemn thee, to deal with thee according to thy Sins, and send thee to Hell presently. No, he came to save Sinners, even the very Chief of them:

And

And he has wrought out a full and complete Salvation, that is every way sufficient for thee ; that is large enough to deliver thee from all thy Fears, to supply all thy Wants, and to satisfy all thy Desires : And this Salvation is proclaim'd in the glorious Gospel, as infinitely free for the most Undeserving. If thou hast no Worthiness, nothing to bring to God, thou mayst have Salvation freely, *Isa. iv. 1.* Yea, if thou hast a longing Desire after it, thou art the Soul that Christ invites to take thy Fill freely : *If any Man thirst, (says he) let him come unto me, and drink, John vii. 37.* And let him that is a thirst, come : *And whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely, Rev. xxii. 17.* There is an infinite Fulness of Life and Salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ, for the worst of Sinners ; and there is Salvation in no other : And therefore, if the Cry of thy Soul is, *What must I do to be saved ?* Thou art commanded, even Thou in particular, to *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ* ; and in so doing, thou hast the faithful Promise of a God that cannot lie, that *thou shalt be saved, Acts xvi. 31.* And Believing is looking unto Christ alone for Salvation, *Isa. xlvi. 22.* Asking it of him, *John iv. 10.* Coming to him for it, *Mat. xi. 18.* Trusting in his Name, *Mat.*

xii. 21. and committing thy Soul into his Hands, 2 Tim. i. 12. And wouldst thou Believe? Why, venture, in the face of ten thousand Sins, Fears, and Discouragements, to cast thyself down at Jesus Feet, and say, with the poor Leper, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean,* Luke v. 12. and with the Publican, *God be merciful to me a Sinner,* Luke xviii. 13. and thou shalt find Grace in his Sight ; his Mercy will bid thee live ; thou shalt pass from Death to Life, and never come into Condemnation, John v. 24.

Philemon xv. For perhaps he therefore departed for a Season, that thou shouldst receive him for ever. The Apostle Paul, in these Words, puts *Philemon* in mind of the wonderful Grace and Providence of God, in over-ruling the Departure of *Onesimus*, for a Season from him his Master, as a Means of his Conversion to Christ, that so he might receive him for ever : Not merely now as a Servant, but as a Brother in Christ, which is a Relation that can never be dissolved. *Onesimus* was Servant to *Philemon* ; he wrong'd his Master, ran away, and was brought by some means or other into the Prison where St. Paul was : Upon which the Apostle preaches Christ, and the Word of his Grace to this poor Sinner ; and the Power of God accompanying the Word

Word of the Gospel, gave it Entrance into his Soul, form'd the New Creature there, and enabled him to believe in Jesus : Upon which the Apostle rejoiceth, and acquaints *Philemon* with this wonderful Grace, exhorting him to receive *Onesimus*, *not now as a Servant, but as a Brother beloved in the Lord*, with the same Kindness and Joy he had us'd to shew unto the Apostle himself, who lov'd him as his own Soul.

And was there such Grace in the Heart of God towards *Onesimus* ? What Encouragement may this be to thee ? The Lord is as full of Love and Bowels now as ever, and extends the same Free-Grace, and boundless Compassion to Sinners now, as then. And did mighty Grace lay hold upon *Onesimus*, when he was in the Height of his Rebellion ; when he had just added Theft to all his other Sins, and ran away from God, as well as from his Master ? then sure, nothing is too hard for reigning Grace ; it can conquer the most rebellious Creature, and pardon the greatest Sins. None of all thy Sins, tho' great as Mountains, and numberless as the Stars, can hinder thy Salvation, if the Lord resolve to be gracious unto thee : No, where Sin abounds, Grace much more abounds. None of thy Sins are too great for reigning Grace

to pardon, for omnipotent Grace to subdue. Grace will reign gloriously, displaying its Riches upon a Vessel of Mercy, in its complete Salvation, notwithstanding all its Unworthiness, and Provocations, its Ill Deservings, and Hell-deservings ; no Opposition shall stand before it : If God say, I will be gracious to this or that Soul, neither Sin within, nor Men and Devils without, shall hinder its Salvation. Hope therefore in this Grace : For the *Lord takes Pleasure in them that fear him*, (that call upon his Name) *in them that hope in his Mercy*, Psa. cxlvii. 11. And never was any Soul ashamed of its Hope and Confidence in God : No, *Blessed is the Man whose Hope the LORD is*, Jer.xvii. 7. Put thy Trust therefore in the Shadow of his Wings, in the Mercy of God in Christ, and thou shalt never be ashamed nor confounded, World without End, *Psa. xxxvi. 7. Isa. xlv. 17.* Again, did God, in his all-wise Providence, who *works all Things after the Counsel of his own Will*, over-rule the Departure of *Onesimus*, to bring him under the Apostle's Preaching, which was the Means of his Conversion ? Then 'tis plain, that there is an appointed Time to bring Souls home to Christ ; *a Day of Power*, in which they shall be *made willing*, Psa. cx. 3. And what if I should say, I hope this Time

Time of Love is come unto thee, and this Work of Power begun upon thee. Once more, did God over-rule the Departure of *Onesimus* from his Master *for a Season*, that so he might receive him for ever, and that with Advantage? Even so, let me say, did God over-rule his Peoples Departure from him in the Fall, and in this Time-State, to commend his Love the more in bringing them again to himself, to receive them for ever, in an higher Relation, and Glory, than they had when they were with him in their first Father, *Adam*. And what if the Lord, in his Thoughts of Love towards thee, did suffer thee to depart from him for a Season, that so he might bring thee again to himself, and receive thee for ever! He tells thee in his Word, that thou hast departed from him by Sin, Ezek. vi. 9. he bids thee return again, and says, thou shalt find Mercy, Isa. lv. 7. and has promis'd to receive thee, 2 Cor. vi. 17. And those whom Christ receives, he receives for ever. His Arms stand wide open to embrace thee; and if thou art helpt to return to him, he says, he will in no wise cast thee out, John vi. 37. he will receive thee to the Glory of God, Rom. xv. 7. he will keep thee by his Power thro' Faith unto Salvation, 1 Peter i. 5. and suffer neither Sin, Men,

nor Devils to pluck thee out of his Hands ;
John x. 28.

2 Cor. iv. 3. *But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid unto them that are lost.* The Apostle Paul, in these Words, speaking in his own Name, and in the Name of the other Apostles, calls the Gospel of Christ, *Our Gospel*; because it was the Ministry which they had received of the Lord Jesus, the Message they were sent to publish, and the glad Tidings which they preach'd. And as they preach'd the Gospel of Christ with the greatest Evidence, and clearest Demonstration; so the Holy Spirit attended their Ministry, and made it *the Power of God*, unto the Salvation of Multitudes; who receiv'd the Truth in the Love of it, upon the fullest Conviction, and with the highest Assurance. Upon which the Apostle utters these Words; *but if our Gospel be hid, it is hid unto them that are lost.* As if he should say, ‘ We have preach'd the Gospel of a Crucified, Risen, and Ascended Saviour, so plainly, convincingly, and powerfully; that if it be hid unto any Souls, they are certainly in a lost Condition.’ That is, they are at present *Dead in Sins*, they are not *New Creatures*; and so have no Spiritual Eye to see the Glory of Christ which brightly shines in his blessed Gospel; they

they are under the Government of Satan, who blindeth their *Minds*; they are still in the State wherein they were born, going astray from God, and not yet *returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of Souls*. Again, if the Gospel be always hid unto any Souls, they are such which are irrecoverably lost; if after all the preaching of Salvation by Jesus Christ, there be any that live and die ignorant of, and in enmity to the glorious Gospel, they are certainly such who perish for ever.

And now, if thou shouldest be afraid, that thou art at present in a lost Condition; yet, were it so, thou art not in a hopeless Condition. For all the Chosen of God, who are now found by the great Shepherd, and called to be Saints, were once in a lost State by Nature, as well as thee. All Christ's Sheep, which his Father gave him, went astray by Sin; and turning every one to his own Way, they lost and destroy'd themselves; or brought themselves into such a miserable Condition, that they were utterly undone: And had neither Will, Skill, nor Power to deliver themselves from that perishing State in which they were involved. But such was the infinite Grace of God the Father, that he laid their Sins upon his own Son; and such the boundless Grace of Christ, that

died for them, in their stead, to bring them again to God ; and such is the astonishing Grace of the Holy Spirit, that he quickens 'em when dead in Sins, gives them to see their own Misery, and Christ's Excellency, and brings them home to him, their great Shepherd. Art thou *lost*? it was Such Christ *came to seek and save*. Luke xix. 10. And he goeth after that which is *lost* until he findeth it, and when he hath found it, he layeth it on his Shoulders, and bringeth it home rejoicing ; saying to his Friends and Neighbours, the Saints and Angels, *rejoice with me, for I have found my Sheep which was lost.* Luke xv. 4, 5, 6. Christ took such Pleasure in saving lost Sinners, that he died for them, that so he might accomplish it ; yea, he now lives in Heaven to intercede for them ; and when, as a Fruit thereof, they are brought home to his Fold, he rejoiceth over 'em to save them *to the uttermost.* Therefore be not discourag'd, for if thou art lost, Christ can find thee, and if thou hast no Power to return, he can lay thee on his Shoulders, and bring thee Home ; yea, if thy Case was so miserable, that thou hadst no Will to return, Christ can make thee willing in a Moment ; for he is in all respects, *mighty to save.* But if he has given thee a Will, a Desire to return

turn unto God in Christ , he has already found thee out, and laid hold on thy Heart by his Almighty Power, and he'll bring thee home to God, both here in Grace, and hereafter in Glory, presenting thee with exceeding Joy. If he has given thee a Sight of thy own Misery, and a Glimpse of his Beauty, so as to beget a Desire in thy Soul after him, the Gospel of Christ has already begun to shine into thy Heart, and it shall shine more and more until *the perfect Day*; and it shall never be hid unto thee, as it is unto them that are lost.

1 Cor. xv. 2. *By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain.* The Apostle Paul, having preach'd the Gospel of Christ unto the *Corinthians*, and particularly the great and comfortable Doctrine of the Resurrection ; he here exhorts them to a constant Remembrance thereof, it being of so great Importance. There were, at that Time, some in the Church at *Corinth*, who were so far fallen away from the Doctrine of the Gospel, as to deny the Resurrection of the Dead ; for which Reason the Apostle insists largely upon that Article in this Chapter. In the *first Verse*, he professeth to declare afresh the Gospel that he had formerly preach'd to them, which

which they had receiv'd, and wherein they, professedly, did stand. *By which*, says he, in this second Verse, *ye are saved, if ye keep in Memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.* It seems to me, that the Time-Salvation of the Saints, from Errors, Heresies, and Soul-Distresses, is what the Apostle here intends ; which is closely connected with a believing Remembrance of the Doctrines of the Gospel, and particularly this of the Resurrection. In like manner as he says, *We are saved by Hope.* Rom. viii. 24. Which is evidently intended of our Time-Salvation : for in no other Sense can we be said to be saved by Hope ; for when once we come to the Enjoyment of that Salvation hoped for, the Exercise of that Grace ceaseth ; as he there argues, *for Hope that is seen, is not Hope.* And then in the last Clause, *unless ye have believed in vain*, he sweetly puts them in mind how they did at first receive the Gospel, and this Doctrine of the Resurrection ; how they once saw a Glory in the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, to discharge them from Sin, and raise their Souls to Life here, and their Bodies unto Life eternal, at the Morning of the Resurrection. And, as if he should further say, can you now easily part with what you once liv'd in

the Faith of ? Have you believed in vain ? Is the Faith you once had of these great Things, become a light Matter, an empty Thing ? Or can you let your doctrinal Faith of the Gospel lie by in your Judgments as a useless Thing ? Have you not a continual Need of exercising Faith therein, when without it you can neither live safely from Heresies, fruitfully unto God, nor joyfully to your own Souls ? This your Time-Salvation, as your Privilege, being closely connected with your Duty, in a believing Remembrance of the Doctrines of the Gospel, which you did receive : This, in brief, I take to be the Meaning of the Words. For there are none that believe in Jesus for eternal Life, that can believe in vain, in this respect ; No, they *are passed from Death unto Life, and shall never come into Condemnation.* Their eternal Salvation is not uncertain, but absolute : It stands immoveably fixt upon *Christ*, the unchangeable *Rock of Ages*, by the immutable *Word* and *Oath* of a *God that cannot lie.* John v. 24. Mat. vii. 24,25. Heb. vi. 18. Tit. i. 2.

Well then, if as a perishing Sinner, thou fleest for *Refuge* to *lay hold* on *Christ*, the *Hope set before thee*, thou shalt be eternally saved : Upon thy first *Act of Faith*, as soon as ever thou art got into the City of Re-

Refuge, thou wilt be eternally safe, for ever out of all Danger of everlasting Misery ; and as an *Inhabitant of the Rock*, thou mayst sing, beginning the Work of Praise here, which will be thy eternal Employment in Heaven. And if it is the Duty of Believers to keep up a quick and constant Remembrance of the glorious Gospel which they have receiv'd, in order to their Time-Safety, Fruitfulness and Comfort ; then do thou also labour to think and meditate upon every Truth of the Gospel, every Beam of Light that springs into thy Mind, under the preaching or reading of the Words of this Life : For this will be an effectual Means to preserve thee from Soul-Distress in an Hour of Temptation, to strengthen thy weak Hope, and encrease thy Joy.

1 Cor. xiv. 38. But if any Man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. It seems, by the Coherence of these Words, that there were some in this Church of *Corinth*, who were greatly puff'd up with Pride, and a vain Conceit of their being spiritual, even to a slighting or despising the Dictates of the Apostle, under the immediate Inspiration of the Holy Spirit : And there having been such abundant Evidence of his Apostle-

postleship, and that it was the Truth of *Christ* which he preach'd and wrote ; if after all, there were any who would wilfully shut their Eyes against the Light, and pretend Ignorance ; he, in these Words, resolves to leave them, and take no further Pains for their Conviction. *If any Man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.* 'Tis as if he should say, 'If after all the Signs of an Apostle, which have been shewn in me, and that abundant Demonstration of the Spirit with which I preach and writ the Gospel of Christ ; any Man who thinks himself spiritual, will not behold my Mission from *Christ*, nor acknowledge my infalible Guidance into all Truth by the Divine Spirit ; let him remain just where he is, *let him be ignorant still*'.

But there is no Reason for thee to be discourag'd from this Text : If thou seest thyself to be an ignorant Creature, and groans under it, this is no Threatning to thee, that thou shalt abide in thy Ignorance still. No, the Lord *Jesus Christ* is made of God *Wisdom*, unto such that have none at all. 1 Cor. i. 30. His Father has call'd him to the Office of Prophet, on purpose to teach the Ignorant, to *open their blind Eyes* :

Eyes : Isa. xlvi. 7. And he has promis'd to bring the Blind by a Way that they knew not, to lead them in Paths which they have not known, to make Darkness Light before them, and crooked Things straight. These things, says he, will I do unto 'em, and not forsake them, Isa. xlvi. 16. He can have Compassion on the Ignorant, and them that are out of the Way, Heb. v. 2. If the High-Priest under the Law could have Compassion, much more can Christ, whose Bowels are infinite. Wast thou the most ignorant Creature in the World, Christ can teach thee efficaciously, or teach thee to profit ; that is, he can remove thy Ignorance, and give thee the Knowledge of himself, and of the Father in him ; whom to know is Life eternal, John xvii. 3. If Christ teach thee to profit, he will do it as the L O R D thy God by a creating Power, Isa. xlviii. 17. If Christ will shine into thy Heart, to give thee the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, as the God of all Grace in him, thy Darkness shall flee before it. If he say but the Word, Let there be Light , as he did in the first Creation, immediately the Light appears, and the darkest Soul is made Light in the Lord. Be encourag'd therefore, to come unto him under all thy apprehended Darkness,

ness, and cast thyself down at his Feet, and say, *What I know not, teach thou me,* Job xxxiv. 32. For he is infinitely *able to save thee, in this respect, to the uttermost.* In him *are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge:* His Wisdom is infinite, his Power Almighty, and his Compassions boundless. And this mighty Saviour, is a Saviour in Office, it is his Office to teach poor Sinners that are ignorant; and he is *good and upright;* and he will do it, *Psal. xxv. 8.* He will *teach Sinners,* because of the infinite Goodness of his Nature, and because he is *upright also,* or *faithful to him that appointed him,* and to his own Engagements also, by Covenant and Promise: And never did any Soul perish for want of Knowledge, that waited upon him for teaching; no, he'll make the Way of Life so plain, that *a way-faring Man, tho' a Fool, shall not err therein,* Isa. xxxv. 8.

*The Grace of Christ be with thy Spirit.
I am Thine in Him, &c.*

LETTER X.

To Mrs. S.

Dear Friend,

Having heard how the Tempter made use of that Word, *Hab. ii. 4.* to distress thy Soul, it was on my Heart to write a few Lines to acquaint thee with what I take to be the Meaning thereof. *Bekold, his Soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him.* The Intent of the Holy Ghost in these Words, is, to set forth the perishing State of an Unbeliever: And here is, 1. A Description given of him, that he is such an one *whose Soul is lifted up.* And, 2. Here is a Declaration made concerning him, that his Soul *is not upright in him.*

The Person that is here said to be lifted up, is such an one that is lifted up in Pride, or a vain Conceit of the Sufficiency of his own Righteousness to stand in before God, and to screen him from his vindictive Wrath. It is such an one that, *Pharisee* like, exalteth himself, commends his own Righteousnes, and dares to plead it before God, as the Cause why his Wrath should turn

turn away from him. Thus there were some among God's professing People of old, who, being lifted up in a Conceit of their own Righteousness, pleaded their Innocence, as the Cause why his Anger should turn from them. But this their Confidence in their own Righteousness, and of their Deliverance upon that Bottom, the Lord tells them that he *rejected*, and that he would *plead with* them, because they said *they had not sinned*, Jer. ii. 35, 37. Thus an Unbeliever is here describ'd, as one who, in this Sense, is lifted up. And then we have

The Declaration that is made concerning him ; *Behold*, says the Lord, look upon the Man that is thus lifted up, *his Soul is not upright in him*. It is a legal Uprightness that is here intended : And it is as if the Lord should say, ‘ In vain doth that Soul plead his own Righteousness for Deliverance from my avenging Justice, who cleaves to the Works of the Law, as the Matter of his Justification before me : For such is the Purity of my holy Law, that it will find innumerable Faults with his pretended Obedience ; the Crookedness thereof will abundantly appear, when compar'd with the Straightness of that perfect Rule. And such is the Strictnes

‘ of

* of my Justice, that to vindicate my own
 * Honour, I must pour out my Wrath,
 * according to all the Curses of my righteous
 * Law, upon that Soul who dares to
 * trust in his own imperfect Obedience, in
 * the *filthy Rags* of his own Righteousness :
 * his Soul is not upright in him ; and
 * therefore his external Obedience can't be
 * so. My Law requires Soul-Uprightness,
 * or perfect Conformity in Heart, Lip, and
 * Life, in that Person who will be justified
 * thereby : And since his Soul is not up-
 * right, it will condemn him, and he must
 * die the Death, who will dare to stand at
 * the Bar of my Justice, to be try'd by my
 * holy Law'. And that this is the Declara-
 tion the Lord here makes concerning
 an Unbeliever, or the Soul that is lifted up,
 is plain from the opposite, or what stands
 oppos'd to this, in the latter Part of the
 Verse ; *But the Just shall live by his Faith* :
 Especially, if we look upon this Text, as
 quoted by the Apostle, to prove, that the
 Justification of a Sinner before God, stands
 alone in his Free-Grace, thro' the imputed
 Righteousness of Christ, to the utter Ex-
 clusion of the Works of the Law in that
 Point, *Gal. iii. 11.* *But that no Man is*
justified by the Law in the Sight of God, it
is

is evident : For, *The Just shall live by his Faith.*

The Just]. There is no Way for a Sinner to be just with God, but by the Blood and Righteousness of Christ. And in this Way, God can be *Just*, and yet the *Justifier of him which believes in Jesus*, that desires to be found in him, and looks for Salvation from him alone, *Rom. iii. 26.*

Shall live]. The eternal Life, or Salvation of a Sinner, stands alone in God's Free-Grace, thro' the Blood and Righteousness of Christ, *Eph. i. 7.* *In whom we have Redemption thro' his Blood, the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace.* *Rom. v. 19, 20, 21.* For as by one Man's Disobedience, many were made Sinners ; so by the Obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover, the Law enter'd, that the Offence might abound : But where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound : that as Sin hath reigned unto Death, even so Grace might reign thro' Righteousness, unto eternal Life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

By his Faith]. Or that which his Faith lays hold of. For when the Lord is about to make any Soul a Partaker of this Salvation, he shews it its own Sinfulness and Misery, and that it is utterly impossible for

for it to be saved by the Works of the Law, or by its own Obedience to the Law ; because it can do nothing in that perfect Manner which the Law of God requires ; and therefore inevitably comes under the Curse for every Failure : upon which the Soul dies unto all Hope of Life by the Works of the Law : And then he opens to it a Way of Life, that in all respects suits an undone Sinner, by his Free-Grace, thro' a crucified and risen Jesus ; and begets Faith in the Soul, or a secret Persuasion that there is enough in Christ, and what he has done, to save it. Whereupon, the Soul ventures into Christ, tho' it fees itself over-spread with Sin, as with a Leprosy, and says, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.* And the Lord, to shew his infinite Grace, as well as his Ability to save, immediately says, *I will, be thou clean,* Luke v. 12, 13. By which he conveys a full and everlasting Salvation to that Soul. And thus *the Just shall live by his Faith.* *For unto him that worketh not,* that brings none of his own Works to justify him before God; *but believeth on him that justifieth the Un-godly;* that draws nigh to God upon his Throne of Grace, and pleads the Extension of his Mercy and Grace thro' his own Son ; *his Faith is counted for Righteousness,* or *that*

that which his Faith lays hold on, the Blood and Righteousness of Christ, God the Father imputes or reckons unto him, as the Matter of his Justification, and declares his Acceptance of him, and Well-pleasedness with him in his dear Son, *Rom.* iv. 5. Thus *the Just shall live by his Faith*, in respect of Justification : For that Soul that looks for all its Acceptance with God, by his Free-Grace, thro' his dear Son, shall never die ; but is *passed from Death unto Life*, *John v. 24.* And the justified Soul, having an indefeasible Right to all that immeasurable Fulness of Life in Christ, it is its Duty and Privilege to live by Faith in respect of Expectation ; looking for a continual Communication of Life out of Christ's Fulness, for the full Supply of all his Wants, thro' Time, and to Eternity : And in this respect, it is to live by Faith, until Faith is swallow'd up in Vision. In these Words then, we have two Sorts of Persons spoken of, Believers, and Unbelievers ; the one lifted up in a Conceit of their own Righteousness ; the other just, or justified in Christ's ; and the End of the One, which is Death, imply'd, in that he is not upright, and so under the Law's Curse ; and of the other, which is Life, declar'd, *Bethold, his Soul which is lifted up;*

is not upright in him ; But the Just shall live by his Faith.

And now, dear Soul, it is evident, that it was the Father of Lies who apply'd these Words unto thee, to afflict and distress thy Heart : He apply'd 'em to the wrong Person ; since thou wast not lifted up in a Conceit of thy own Righteousness, but in the Hope of God's free Mercy, thro' the Blood and Righteousness of his Son. And in this thou needest not fear being lifted up too high. No, poor Soul, hast thou been humbled in the Dust, under a Sense of thy own Vileness ? Thou art then that *Valley* which the Lord has promis'd to *exalt*.

xl. 4. Hast thou no Righteousness of thy own, and so art low in thy own Eyes ? Thou shall be exalted in Christ's, *Psal.*

Ixxxix. 16. And as thy Person is exalted in this, far out of the Reach of all thy Soul-Enemies ; so, in the Lord's time, thy Faith also shall be exalted, and thou shalt rejoice in his Name all the Day-long. Go

on therefore *in the Strength of the Lord*, making mention of his Righteousness, even of his only : And fear none of thy Enemies, Sin, Men, nor Devils : For none of them shall be able to condemn thy Soul, to pluck thee out of Christ's *Hands*, or separate thee from his Love ; which is *better than Life natural,*

natural, and in which there is Life for thee, both spiritual, and eternal. And whoever, or whatever would discourage thee, Christ bids thee to *rejoice in him*, and that *always*, Phil. iv. 4. Christ got the Victory over all thy Soul-Enemies, by the Strength of his mighty Arm ; and he gives it unto thee, Col. ii. 14, 15. Psal. xciii. 1. 1 Cor. xv. 57. Rejoice therefore in his mighty Conquest ; for thou dividest the Spoil.

And fear none of those Things which thou may'st suffer from the Malice of Satan in any of his wicked Instruments : For if thou shouldst have Tribulation *ten Days*, during the Time appointed of the Lord ; as he bounds their Rage, so he'll over-rule thy Sufferings for his own Glory, and thy Good ; while thy *light Affliction* *which is but for a Moment*, worketh for thee *a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17. Reckon therefore, that the Sufferings of this present Time, are not worthy to be compar'd with the Glory which shall be revealed in thee. Rom. viii. 18. Rejoice that thou art counted worthy to suffer Shame for his Name : For if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together. Be faithful therefore unto Death ; and Christ will give thee a Crown of Life, Rev. ii. 10.

Into Christ's Arms I commit thee, to support, defend, and embrace thee, while passing thro' a World of Trials, until he bring thee home unto himself, to be *forever with him to behold his Glory*; and rest, with dear Love,

Thine in Him, &c.

LETTER XI.

To Mrs. G.

Dear Friend,

Having heard of thy Soul-Distress, and thy Fear lest the Promises of God do not belong to thee, I was willing to write a few Lines unto thee. And if thou hast seen thy lost Condition by Sin, that thou art forever undone without an Interest in Christ, and hast a Desire to be saved by him alone; there is a full and everlasting Salvation in Christ prepar'd for thee, which thou art call'd to receive freely. *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners, (says the Apostle) of whom I am chief, 1 Tim. i. 15.* If thou feest thy self to be a chief Sinner, it

it was such Christ came to save. If thou labour under, and art heavy laden with Sin ; it is thee, in particular, that Christ calls to come unto him, and has promis'd to give thee Rest, Mat. xi. 28. ‘ Aye, sayst thou, ‘ if I had an interest in the Promises, I ‘ should think myself happy ’. Why, poor Soul, all that Life and Salvation for Sinners, which is declar'd in the Promises, is summed up in Christ. Lay hold therefore upon him by Faith, who is *the Hope set before thee in the Gospel*, as infinitely free for the worst of Sinners ; and thou mayst lay claim to all the Promises. For *all the Promises of God are in him ; yea, and in him, Amen.* 2 Cor. i. 20.

They are all of them [in] him. And that Soul that looks unto Christ alone for Salvation, believeth in him, is entred into him as its City of Refuge, its Place of Defence, and Soul-Rest. And there it is well provided for, exceeding safe, and eternally secure : For,

[All] the Promises of God are in him, yea. Perhaps thou seest a Glory in a particular Promise, and think’st, Oh how glad should I be if this Promise was mine ! Why, if thou hast a Desire to be found in Christ, thou art in him ; and so all the Promises are thine : not one, two, or three

only, but all the Promises of God : Not a Promise in the Bible, but belongs to that Soul, who commits itself into the Hands of Christ to be saved by him. Hast thou done so ? thou art rich enough : Thou hast all that thou canst desire ; yea, and infinitely more. For *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard,* the glorious things which God hath prepared for that Soul, who runs, as a perishing Sinner, into the Name of Christ as the mighty Saviour, to shelter itself in him, who is an Hiding-place from the Wind, and a Covert from the Storm of divine Vengeance. If thou hast ever put forth one Act of Faith upon Jesus, or cast one Look unto him for Life ; thou hast Christ, and eternal Life in him ; all the Promises of God are thine ; and thy Riches, in that one great Promise of the new Covenant, 2 Cor. vi. 16. *I will be their God,* are infinitely greater than Man or Angels can reckon up.

And as all the Promises of God meet in Christ, so they are in him [yea] : They all agree, as with one united Voice, to grant that full and comprehensive Salvation, which is in Christ, to every believing Soul, with one Yea. They are not *Yea* and *Nay*; some of them *Yea*, and others *Nay* ; but *in him they are all Yea.* And as they are *all*

all Yea in Christ, so in him they are always Yea ; not Yea at one time, and Nay at another ; but a fixed, eternal Yea.

And as all the Promises of God are in Christ, Yea, as they are all, and always of one Mind in the Grant of Salvation unto every one that believeth in Jesus ; so likewise they are all of them in him, *Amen*. They all stand in him confirmed, with God's *So let it be*, or So it shall be ; which efficaciously produceth all the Salvation granted. And since all the Promises of God, are in Christ, *Amen* ; there is an absolute, infallible Certainty of the Performance of all the good Things which the Lord hath spoken. Then surely *the Heirs of Promise* may have *strong Consolation*.

But it may be, thou wilt say, ' I fear ' I am not one of the Heirs of Promise '. Well, dost thou see thyself to be a perishing Sinner ? Dost thou know that there is Salvation in Christ ? And hast thou a Desire after it ? Why, then ask him for it ; and he will in no wise send thee away empty. *If thou knewst the Gift of God, (said our Lord to the Samaritan Woman) and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to Drink, thou wouldest have asked, and he would have given thee living Water,* John iv. 10. Then open thy

thy Mouth wide ; for he has promis'd to fill it, Psal. lxxxiv. 10. Thou needest not be afraid of asking more Grace than Christ has to bestow, or is willing to give to the most Unworthy, the very Chief of Sinners. And never did any Soul ask Christ for the *Water of Life*, Grace here, and Glory hereafter, but he gave it its Fill freely. *Ask therefore, and thou shalt receive ; seek, and thou shalt find ; knock, and it shall be open'd unto thee, Mat. vii. 7.* For Christ lives in Heaven on purpose to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by him, *Heb. vii. 25.*

And now, that you may be enabled to flee for *Refuge to lay hold on Christ, the Hope set before you*, and as an *Heir of Promise* have strong *Consolation* in him, in whom *all the Promises of God are Yea and Amen, to the Glory of God by us*, is the earnest Desire of

Your loving Friend in the Lord, &c.

L E T-

LETTER. XII.

To Mr. L.

Dear Sir,

Grace, Mercy and Peace be multiplied unto you, from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, by the blessed Spirit.

You told me, to the Joy of my Heart, that you hop'd Christ was precious to your Soul. And if thou hast seen thy own Misery by Sin, that thou art for ever undone without him ; and hast also had a Glimpse of his Glory , Excellency , and Suitableness as the alone Saviour, he is precious indeed unto thee, *the Chiefest of ten thousand in thy Esteem.* Whatever others think of Christ, thou hast high and honourable Thoughts of him, and of what he has done and suffer'd for the Salvation of Sinners, and of what he is now doing for them in Heaven, where he ever lives as an Intercessor, to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by him. Yea, has not thy Soul fell down, and ador'd him, in those happy Moments wherein thou hast beheld his Glory ? And has not a Sight of

his Beauty wrought in thee Soul-endearing Thoughts of this lovely Jesus ? And tho' ; perhaps, thou couldst not say, *this is my Beloved, and this is my Friend* ; with a full Persuasion that he was thy Saviour ; yet, has not a Glimpse of his Excellency attracted and drawn out thy Soul into earnest Longings, Pantings, and Breathings after him, and an Interest in him, as the Sum of all that Happiness thy Soul could crave, both in this World and in that which is to come ? I know, it is so with those Souls that see Jesus, just in those Moments in which his Glory is presented to their Eye. And has it been thus with thee ? Hast thou ever had such a Glimpse of Christ, that drew thy Soul after him, and made thee cry, ‘ Lord, give me Christ, ‘ whatever thou deniest me of : Let me ‘ have him for my Portion ; and as to other ‘ things, deal with me as thou pleasest : A ‘ World, without Christ, will not satisfy ‘ me : Give me Christ, and I have enough ! ’ If these are the Breathings of thy Heart, thou art a Believer, whether thou know’st it, or not. And Christ is thine, everlasting thyne ; and neither Sin, Death, nor Hell shall separate thee from his Love. Thou art exceeding safe, and mayst be very joyful : For in having Christ, thou hast Life ;

Life

Life of Grace, and Life of Glory. All Things are thine : Thou shalt have all that Happiness, both for Soul and Body, which God sees best for thee in this World, and a boundless Ocean of Joy and Glory beyond it, to a never-ending Eternity. Hast thou committed thy Soul into Christ's Hands ? Thou art his Care : Thou art Christ's, not thy own : He has taken the Charge of thee ; and as such, he'll keep thee safe, defend thee from all Dangers, strengthen thy Grace, and meeten thee for Glory. He will preserve thee *from falling*, and *present thee faultless before the Presence of his Father's Glory with exceeding Joy.*

Then cleave to the Lord *with full Purpose of Heart* : Go on venturing thy Soul in the Hands of Jesus, trusting in him when he seems to slay thee, and waiting for him when he hides his Face from thee : And thus follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, in all the Ordinances of his own Appointment here, and thou shalt certainly be found among the Lamb's Company, who shall sit down with him on his Throne, and be crown'd as Overcomers, at his next Appearing. Make haste, and don't delay to keep his Commandments : Do not let Satan and Unbelief hinder thee any longer from giving up thyself to the Lord, and

his Service : For thy Working time for God will be soon over. Oh ! hast thou not been thy own long enough already ? Wilt thou not from this Time give up thyself to the Lord ? *Wilt thou not*, says he, *from this Time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the Guide of my Youth ?* Jer. iii. 4.

‘ How long will it be, as if the Lord should say, e’re thou own me for thy Father, and follow me as a Child ; trusting in me for Strength and Guidance to conduct thee safe thro’ a World of Trials, into my own Bosom ? Wilt thou not from this time cleave to me ? ’ So would I say unto thee : Wilt thou not from this time be the Lord’s ? Remember, *the Day is far spent* ; and what thou dost for God, thou must do quickly : *Boast not of tomorrow* ; *for thou knowest not what a Day may bring forth*, Pro. xxvii. 1. Therefore *whatsoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with thy Might*, Eccles. ix. 10. Wast thou to live to the Age of *Methuselah*, thy God is worthy to have all thy Love, and all thy Obedience, to have all thy Time spent in his Service : But alas ! thou hast but an Inch of Time left, a short Space ; Death and Eternity hasten upon thee ; and then thou’lt not repent that thou gavest up thyself to the Lord so soon, or begans’t to serve

serve him so early ; but rather, that thou didst not begin sooner, and hast done so little for God. It will be to the Honour of those Souls, in the Day of Christ, who have trusted in the Lord, and follow'd him in the Face of ten thousand difficulties from within, and from without. Their Faith and Obedience shall then be own'd and crown'd, by Free-Grace, in the Sight of Men and Angels : Whereas those of the Saints, who, thro' Satan and Unbelief, have been hindred from following Christ in this World, according to his Appointments, will be ashamed before him at his Coming. Their *Works shall be burnt up* ; and they'll suffer loss, tho' they themselves shall be saved, yet so, as by Fire. Therefore let us that have believ'd in Jesus, prize our present Moments, and labour to improve 'em, as an Opportunity put into our Hands to glorify him that hath lov'd us, by shewing our Love to him in keeping his Commandments. His Servants shall eat when others are hungry ; they shall drink, when others are thirsty ; they shall rejoice, when others are ashamed ; they shall sing for Joy of Heart, when others shall howl for Vexation of Spirit, Isa. lxv. 13, 14. If any Man serve me, says our Lord, let him follow me ; and where I am, there shall my Servant be :

if

if any Man serve me, him will my Father honour, John xii. 26. And what canst thou desire more ? Oh happy, thrice happy Souls, who are in such a Case ! Who is like unto 'em, *a People saved of the LORD!*

The Grace of Christ be with thy Spirit.
Amen.

*I am, with all due Respect,
Yours in him, &c.*

LETTER XIII.

To the Lady H.

My dear Christian Lady,

I Beg you'll please to pardon my Boldness, in giving you the Trouble of this ; which I should not have presum'd to do, if I was not comfortably persuaded that you are an elect Lady, that love the Lord Jesus, his Cause, and People, even the very meanest of them ; and therefore will patiently attend to the Chatterings of a Child that cannot speak.

The Apostle *James* exhorts the Saints he wrote to, to rejoice in the Lord, in those various Stations in which the divine Providence had plac'd 'em in this Life, *Jam.*

i. 9,

i. 9, 10. *Let the Brother of low Degree rejoice in that he is exalted ; But the rich, in that he is made low.* Oh what distinguishing Grace is it to you, my dear Lady, that has made you low in your own Eyes ! Since not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called, as i Cor. i. 26. What Grace is it, that you should be one of those few ! an Object of electing Love, and a Subject of calling Grace, when thousands of your Rank and Quality are passed by ! Oh, how many of the great Men of this World have *their good Things, their Portion in this Life ?* while the L O R D is your *Portion*, your Time-Lot, and your eternal All ! He did not think these things good enough for you ; no, he set his great Love upon you from everlasting, and gave you a Portion that is every way answerable to the infinite Love of his Heart, which is no less than his Great SELF ! And having blest you with this Portion before Time, in his everlasting Covenant with his Son ; so, when the appointed Moment of Calling-Love came on, he sent his Holy Spirit down into your Heart, to shew you the Vanity and Emptiness of all worldly Glory, and to ravish your Heart with infinite Sweetness, uncreated Excellency, that so you might seek for, and find a Soul-satisfying

ing Rest in GOD : possessing your vast INHERITANCE in him, by Faith which is in Christ Jesus. The Riches, Honours and Pleasures of this vain World, (which Mr. Rutherford calls, " The Clay- " Portion of Bastards") had never lost their Beauty in your Eye, if the Spirit of the L O R D had not blown upon the Glory of his lower Creation, and made it wither like the mown Grafs in your Sight, *Isa.* xl. 7.

What innumerable Multitudes are there of the World's great, wise, mighty and noble Men, who continually dote upon its gilded Toys, and empty Nothings ; as if there was a Happiness in 'em agreeable to the Nature of an immortal Soul ? And You had never found them to be unsatisfying *Husks*, if you had not been one of God's Children, for whom the *Bread of Life* is prepared in your *Father's House*.

Again, what Multitudes are there, that dote upon their own Excellencies , their natural Endowments, and moral Performances ; as if they were some of the most beautiful Creatures in the World ? And even dare go about *to establish their own Righteousness*, as their justifying Dress before God ? And you likewise had been of this miserable Number, if the Spirit of the L O R D

LORD had not blown upon created Glory, in this respect also. Your natural Excellencies and Performances had never lost their Brightness in your Eye, if the Spirit of the L O R D had not given you a Sight of the transcendent Glory, and infinite Excellency of the Person and Righteousness of Jesus Christ ; to attract your Soul after him, as the chiefest of ten thousand, the fairest in both Worlds, the Sum of all your Happiness, and Center of your Desires ! 'Tis the Soul-ravishing Beauty, the adorable Excellency of Christ, the Glory-Sun, darted by the Spirit upon the Eye of your Faith, which has put out the Light of Creature-Beauties, and extinguish'd them out of your Sight ; so as to make you say, with the *Psalmist*, Psa. lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee ? and there is none upon the Earth that I desire besides thee.* And with the Apostle *Paul*, Phil. iii. 7, 8, 9. *But what Things were Gain to me, those I counted Loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all Things but Loss, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord : for whom I have suffer'd the Loss of all Things, and do count them but Dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him ; not having my own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is thro' the Faith of Christ, the Right-*

Righteousness which is of God by Faith. Oh what a special Privilege is this, to be made so low, as to be beholding to Christ for all ! For all Happiness, Life and Glory, in this World, and that to come ! Well may *the Brother, or Sister, of high Degree rejoice, in that* they are *made thus low* : Forasmuch, as the Lord, by this Work of his Grace, is preparing that Person for a Life and Glory that is far superior to all earthly Enjoyments ; yea, no less than the high and eternal Exaltation of the heavenly State !

Has it been thus with you, my dear Lady ? Has the Lord stript you naked of created Excellencies ? 'Tis in order to fill, satisfy, and clothe you with his own immense Glories ! What reason then have you to rejoice in the Lord, both now, and for evermore ? And believe it, that your high Station in the World (what Thorns and Briars soever attend it) was appointed for you, by the same infinite Love that ordain'd your eternal Salvation : Like it therefore, as the Choice of infinite Wisdom, the Way laid out for you to a City of Habitation ; and labour to improve it to the Honour of that Grace which has sav'd you. The Lord may have intended three Things, principally, hereby ; 1. To commend or set off the Glory of distinguishing Grace
the

the more in your eternal Salvation. 2. To give you an Opportunity to glorify God the more on the Earth. And, 3. By this, as a Means, to enhance your future Crown.

How will distinguishing Grace shine in your Salvation, when you shall be plac'd at *Christ's Right Hand*, openly acquitted, discharg'd and blest ; and as such, call'd to *inherit the Kingdom*, that Kingdom of Glory, *prepar'd for you from the Foundation of the World* ; while Thousands of illustrious Souls, the Great, Rich, Mighty, and Noble of the World, shall tremble at the *Lamb's Wrath*, and *call to the Rocks and Mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the Face of him that sits on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb*, when that great Day of his Wrath is come, wherein none of them shall be able to stand ! Matth. xxv. 34. Rev. vi. 15, 16, 17. And how will it raise your Notes of Praise high, when, with the redeemed Company, you join to sing the *Lamb's new Song*, saying, *Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, and has redeemed us unto God with his own Blood, out of ever Kindred, Tongue, People, and Nation, and has made us Kings and Priests unto our God!* Rev. v. 9. Oh ! to see yourself redeem'd by the Lamb's Blood, from all Misery, unto all Glory, out of the great and

and mighty People of the Earth ; while they are left to perish in their Sins, and sent away from *Christ* into eternal Torments ! how will this raise your Wonder at distinguishing Grace, and advance your *Hallelujahs* !

Again, What if God, by your high Station in the World, puts an Opportunity into your Hands to glorify him the more on the Earth ? The L O R D rais'd *Moses* to that high Pitch of Honour in *Pharoah's Court*, that so he might have an Opportunity to glorify God, and to exercise his Graces in denying himself, taking up his Cross, and following *Christ* : For which his Faith is so commended, *Heb. xi. 24, 25, 26.* By *Faith Moses*, when he was come to years, refused to be called the Son of *Pharoah's Daughter* ; chusing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season ; esteeming the Reproach of *Christ* greater Riches than the Treasures in Egypt : For he had respect unto the Recompence of the Reward : If *Moses* had not had so much to lose, how could his Faith and Love, in his Self-Denial, forsaking all for God, have shone so conspicuously ? Of what an excellent Kind did his Faith appear to be, when, at once, he left the Pleasures, Honours, and Treasures

sures of the Court, and the Crown of *Egypt* too, which in all Liklihood he might have enjoy'd ; refusing to be call'd the Son of *Pharoah's Daughter* ; and chusing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God ? He stepp'd down at once from all his Court-royalty, not for any of the Grati-fications of Sense, but to suffer Affliction : Instead of being a Prince, he becomes a Ser-vant, a mean Shepherd, and earns his Bread by keeping of Sheep ; and this he did of mere Choice ; he was not constrain'd there-to, and so submitted to it, but he chose it. Oh, strange Choice, in a Worldling's Eye ! None but them that have the same Faith which *Moses* had, will make such a Choice. But however strange this Choice might seem to *Pharoah's Courtiers* then, or to Un-believers now, it was not an irrational one : No, *Moses* had the highest Reason for what he did ; he acted herein very consistently with spiritual Reason, or the Principles of Reason sanctify'd. And therefore the Holy Ghost gives us the Cause of this won-der-ful Effect : *For he had Respect unto the Re-compense of the Reward.* The Eye of his Faith look'd beyond the Things of Time and Sense, to that transcendent and eternal Glory, which is to be reveal'd in the Saints. He had Soul-ravishing Views of the Infinite Glory

Glory of that GOD, who had said to *Abraham*, and in him to all his Seed, *Fear not, for I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great REWARD*, Gen. xv. 1. And he look'd to the Glory of that happy Day, when a *Crown of Righteousness* shall be set upon the Head of every Overcomer; which drew on his Soul to run in that Way which led to so glorious an End. So that he did not choose to suffer Affliction merely for its own sake, but as it was the Way appointed of God for his People to pass thro' unto the Heavenly Kingdom. He chose to suffer Affliction with the People of God, to cast in his Lot among them, to fare as they did, for present and future, for Time and for Eternity. And this because they had JEHOVAH for their God; such a GOD, that made them the only HAPPY People, in all Conditions, in all Times, and unto all Eternity. And this glorify'd God exceedingly, in that he preferr'd him above all; above all those high Enjoyments he had in *Pharoah's Court*: Yea, he saw such a transcendent Glory in this GOD, as he is to be enjoy'd in and thro' *Christ*, that made him esteem even the very Reproaches he should suffer for his Sake, to be greater Riches than the Treasures in *Egypt*. And thus it was apparent that he made God his

his chief End, in that he forsook all, and follow'd him, thro' thick and thin, better and worse ; that so he might have the present and eternal Enjoyment of him, as his chief Good, and Soul-satisfying A L L ! And tho' the poorest Believer in the World has obtain'd like precious *Faith* with *Moses*, which produceth answerable Effects in his proper Sphere, yet *Moses* had a greater Opportunity to glorify God, in this Respect, in forsaking Abundance for him, because of his high Station in the World. And tho' your Ladyship is not call'd, as *Moses* was, to a personal forsaking of your high Station, yet you are call'd to a cleaving unto *Christ* in it ; which can't be done without leaving the Pleasures, Riches, and Honours of it in Heart ; chusing rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season ; esteeming the Reproach of *Christ*, greater Riches than the Treasures of the Universe. And if your Ladyship's Station was not so high, you could not have such an Opportunity to glorify God, by forsaking so much for him, which his Omnipotent Grace enables you to do, under the Soul-attracting Displays of his infinite Sweetness, and transcendent Glory. And therefore,

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Once more the Design of God, in your high Station, is, to prepare you hereby for your future Crown. It is indeed a thorny Place, where you, as one of Christ Lilies, grow ; and no wonder if they often scratch and tear you. If you was *of the World*, the *World would love its own* ; but because Christ has chosen you out of the *World*, therefore the *World hateth you*. But remember, it hated Christ before it hated you. And I doubt not your Willingness to fear in the *World*, as Christ did, to stay for your Glory, till the whole Course of your Sufferings are fulfill'd ; as knowing that if you suffer with him, you shall also be glorify'd together : The Way to the Kingdom lies thro' much Tribulation : But your dear Lord Jesus will be a Companion with you in it. Not a Sorrow pierceth your Heart, but Christ feels it ; yea, takes it as done to himself : He is privy to all your Distresses, and in dear, sympathizing Love, will support you under 'em, sanctify you by 'em, and deliver you from them. When you have no Christian Friend or Brother by, to tell your Case to, Christ is with you then, who is *a Friend that sticketh closer than a Brother* ; *a Friend that loves at all times*, *a Brother born for Adversity* ; on Purpose to know Adversity, that he might sympathize with you in it,

and

and save you from it ; unto whom you may freely open all your Heart, in the Faith of his infinite Bowels to pity you, and Power to help you. For he'll not only compassionate you in all your Griefs, but in infinite Grace and Faithfulness, he'll richly supply all your Wants. And when you ha'n't Opportunity to converse with Christian Friends, labour to improve that Season, by acquainting yourself more intimately with the Lord Jesus : Drink at the Well-head, the Fountain is infinitely sweeter than the Streams ; and you shall never come to his Bosom, and be sent away empty. Go on therefore, right noble Lady, to cleave unto Christ, by Faith, and every Grace, taking up his Cross daily, and following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth ; reckoning, *that the Sufferings of this present Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in you.* Take Pleasure in denying yourself, in all Respects, for Christ : Be glad that you have any thing to part with for him that has lov'd you. Christ took Pleasure in denying himself, his Great S E L F, for you. And Oh ! what did he deny himself of, when, in infinite Love, he left his Glory in Heaven, became a *Man of Sorrows*, and dy'd on the Cross for you, to redeem

you from Sin and Death, to endless Life and Glory ! And what can be too dear to part with for your dear Lord Jesus ? I'm sure, nothing that he calls for, while your Eye is fixt upon his boundless Love, and your Soul chang'd *into the same Image*. Rejoice therefore that you are *counted worthy to suffer Shame for his Name* ; and esteem *the Reproaches of Christ*, your great and substantial *Riches*. For all the Flouts and Frowns you meet with for cleaving to Christ, his Cause, People, Word and Ordinances in this World, will be as so many Jewels to enrich your Crown in the World to come. Oh, what a rich, massy, embellish'd Crown, will Christ set upon the Heads of those Saints, who have left all, and follow'd him amidst ten thousand Reproaches ! *Ye, (saith our Lord) which have follow'd me, in the Regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the Throne of his Glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.* And every one that hath forsaken Houses, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands for my Name's sake, shall receive an Hundred-fold, (even in this present Time) and shall inherit everlasting Life, Mat. xix. 28, 29. Christ has Thrones for his suffering Saints, which are far superior

rior to all those petty Glories, of which the Princes and Potentates of this World boast. And as for Crowns, Christ has *a Crown of Life, a Crown of Righteousness, a Crown of Glory*, which he'll give to every Overcomer, at his glorious Appearing and Kingdom, *Rev. ii. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 8.* *1 Peter v. 4.* when, of the freest Grace, he'll give Rewards unto his Servants, and to his Saints, and to all that fear his Name both small and great, *Rev. xi. 18.* And then the raised Saints, those starry Glories of the first Resurrection, being marshall'd into Order, shall shine forth in their different Orbs, with an heavenly Lustre, and a World-confounding Splendor: And those shall shine the brightest in that Day, who have been enabled to do and suffer most for Christ in this. For every of their Services, even the meanest, shall then receive a full and proportionable Reward. *1 Cor. xv. 41, 42. Matt. v. 11, 12. and chap. x. 41, 42.* *Blessed then is the Man that endureth Temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promis'd to them that love him,* *Jam. i. 12.*

I am, with the greatest Respect, Your Ladyships, at all Obedience in the Lord, &c.

LETTER XIV.

To Mrs. S.

Dear Friend,

Grace unto you, and Peace be multiply'd.

OUR Lord, *John*, iii. 3. asserts the Necessity of the New-Birth, and ver. 5. declares what kind of Birth he intends, *viz.* *Of Water and of the Spirit*; *i e.* of the Word and Spirit of God; without which no Man *can see*, that is, enjoy, or *enter into the Kingdom of God*. The Reason of it is this; because, in order to all kind of Enjoyment, there must be an Agreeableness in the Person or Thing enjoying, with the Person or Thing enjoyed. This the Apostle declares, *1 Cor.* ii. 14. *But the natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God: because they are Foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* He receives them not, because they are Foolishness unto him; and they are so, because he cannot know them; and the Reason of this, is, because they are spiritually discerned; and he being but a natural Man, has

has no spiritual Eye, no Organ suited to behold a Glory in spiritual Things, which can only be spiritually discerned.

Thus, in the Works of Nature, the All-wise Creator form'd all his Creatures with a Capacity suited to live, act, or be in that proper Element, Sphere, or Place which he had design'd for them ; as Birds in the Air, Fishes in the Water, &c. And as for Man, the Top-piece of the Creation, in whom the whole was, as it were, epitomiz'd, or summed up ; how curiously was he wrought, when he came out of his Maker's Hand ? How excellently was he fitted to enjoy all that great Happiness which was prepared for him ! His Soul, as it came out of his Creator's Hand, was excellently fitted to enjoy Communion with God, as the God of Nature, displaying his Glory in the Creatures ; and his Body, how wonderfully was that fram'd to enjoy the Creatures in this World ? How excellently were all his Senses fitted to their proper Objects ? His Eye to behold the Glory of the Sun, the Variety of Creatures, and the Beauty of Colours ? His Ear to converse with Sounds ? His Palate to taste Meats ? His Smell to take in Scents ? And his Feeling to judge of solid Bodies, perceptible by that Sense ? And as it was in the Format-

on of Man, so, in some measure, it is in his Generation : For, when a Child is born into the World, it is, in these respects, suited to, and has a Desire after the Persons and Things which are therein ; and without this, it could have no Enjoyment of the good Things of Life.

And as it is in the Works of Nature, so in the Works of Grace : For, as this World is prepar'd for the Child's Enjoyment, and then that is generated, and born in order to enjoy it ; so there's a Kingdom prepar'd for the Children of God ; and the Soul must be regenerated, new-born, or born again, before it can see it. There being the same Necessity that the Soul be born into the World of Grace, before it can enjoy that ; as there is that a Man should be born into the World of Nature, before he can enjoy this.

And now, methinks, I hear thee say, ' All this I am convinc'd of ; but I greatly want to know whether I am one of those who are new-born '. If this be thy Case, then ask the Lord to tell thee, and he'll give thee an Answer of Peace in his own Time. There are two Ways whereby a Soul comes to know that it is new-born : The first is, by the Revelation of the Spirit, bearing witness to the Soul,

in some Word or other, where this Truth is declar'd. The second is, by his enabling the Soul to discern its own Acts in divine Light ; and to draw Conclusions from its discerned Acts of Grace, that it has the Principle. And in both these Ways, the Lord can give thee Satisfaction in an instant, if it pleaseth him. But generally speaking, it is some Time ere a Child of God can draw steady Conclusions of its being new-born, from its own Acts of the new Life. And therefore thou mayst be new-born, tho' thou dost not know it !

A living Infant, you know, when first born into the World, hath Life ; but it doth not know it. It had a secret Life from its first quickning in the Womb ; and from thence a secret Motion : but as soon as it is born, it begins to live visibly to others : but yet the Child itself knows nothing of the Matter. It crys, desires the Breast , tastes the Milk, and is satisfy'd; sees the Light, and feels the Heat with Pleasure ; all which are visible Demonstrations of its Life to By-standers ; but the Child knows nothing of it, because it is not capable of Self-reflection. And thus it is with a new-born Soul : There's a secret Work of God upon all the Heart, a Principle of Life given ; and from thence

some secret Motions and faint Stirrings now and then, under begun Convictions, before it is brought forth into the visible Life of Grace ; which discovers itself, as soon as ever the Soul is born again, in the Breath or Cry of the new Creature, its Desires, its Discernings, and its Enjoyments : Which, when communicated to grown Christians, they know such a Soul is one of Christ's new-born Babes ; altho' this Child itself is not yet capable so to reflect upon its own Acts, as to conclude its Life from thence.

And if this be thy Case, that thou canst not pass a Judgment from what thou hast experienced, that thou hast the Life of Grace, or art new-born ; then tell me, as a rational Creature, how it is with thee ? For as such, thou canst tell what the Acts of thy Soul have been ; altho', as a new Creature, thou mayst not yet be come to such an Exercise of thy spiritual Senses, as to know those Acts to be Acts of Grace, and a certain Demonstration of thy being born again.

Well, a living Child sees : What hast thou seen ? Hast thou seen thyself to be a Sinner by Nature, as well as by Practice ? in Heart, as well as Life ? and that thou
art

art utterly undone, and must perish for ever, without an Interest in Jesus Christ ; as being utterly unable to do any thing to deliver thyself from the Wrath to come ? Hast thou seen thy own Righteousness to be but *Filthy Rags* ? and thy own Strength, to do any good, but Weakness ? Again, hast thou seen an Excellency in Christ, as a complete Saviour, that is exceeding suitable to thy Case as a lost Sinner ? And hast thou any Discernings of the Glory of God's Free-Grace and Mercy in Christ ? Thou hast then the new Creature's Eye, discerning Faith, even the Faith of God's Elect.

And, from these Discernings, hast thou been made to cry unto the Lord, to lament thy Sinfulness before him, and to supplicate his Throne for Mercy, praying him to give thee Christ, whatever he denies thee of ? Thou hast then the new Creature's Breath, which flows from none but those that have the new Creature's Life.

Again, what are thy Desires ? Are the Longings of thy Soul after the Free-Grace and Mercy of God in Christ, as held forth in the Promises, those *Breasts of Consolation* ? Thou hast then the new Creature's

Appetite, and art certainly born of the Word and Spirit of God.

Once more, what are thy Enjoyments ? What satisfies and pleaseth thy Soul best ? Has the Free-Grace of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, been sweet and savoury to thee in a Promise, or in an Ordinance to the refreshing and satisfying of thy Soul for some Moments ; just so long as thou hast the *Breast* in thy Mouth, the Grace of the Promise *milk'd* out to thee ? Then thou hast *tasted that the Lord is gracious*, and art one of Christ's new-born Babes. And hast thou ever felt any refreshing Warmth and Comfort in the Love of God, which, like Fire, has warm'd and heated thy cold Soul ? Thou hast then that Sensation which is proper to a new Creature : and it is evident, in all these respects, that thou art certainly born again. And as such, thou shalt see, that is, enjoy *the Kingdom of God*, as a Kingdom of Grace here, which is a Kingdom of Power, *Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost* ; and thou shalt enter into the Kingdom of Glory hereafter, as being made *meet* to be a Partaker of the *Inheritance of the Saints in Light*. For he that is thy God hath prepar'd for thee *a City*, and wrought thy Soul for *this self same thing*. There being

being never a Soul in the World that is thus wrought upon, but is *a Vessel of Mercy prepared unto Glory*, by a saving Work of the Holy Ghost upon it, as well as in the Purposes of God concerning it.

Go on therefore, as a *new-born Babe*, to desire the sincere *Milk of the Word*, the unmixed Grace of the Gospel ; and fear not to receive it, that thou mayst grow thereby. For it is on purpose for thee, to maintain and increase the begun Life of Grace in thy Soul, until it is perfected in the Life of Glory. Rejoice then, thou Lamb of Christ, for thou art exceeding safe under thy kind Shepherd's Care : he'll gather thee with his *Arm*, and carry thee in his *Bosom* ; he'll lead thee into green *Pastures*, beside the still *Waters*, and make thee to lye down safely.

*I am, with dear Love,
Yours in him, &c.*

LETTER XV.

To Mrs. C.

Dear Sister,

I Greet you in the Lord ; wishing *Peace*, from the *God of Peace*, to be extended towards you like a *River*.

I should have wrote to you before now, but I have been hindred, partly thro' the Affliction that has attended my Yoke-fellow, and my own personal Weakness, under which I often groan, because I can do so little for my dear Lord Jesus. Oh, how am I prevented from serving Christ as I would, by reason of the Body of Sin that dwelleth in me, and the Weakness of my natural Frame ! But yet, in Faith, I look forward to the *Day of my Redemption*, and *rejoice in Hope of the Glory of God*, when I shall have done with all natural and sinful Weakness too, and be for ever fill'd with Strength to know, love, and glorify God perfectly. Here we have Weakness attending our Souls, as well as bodily Weakness, to conflict with. What qualms, sick, and fainting Fits come over our Spirits now,

now, at Times, while the Body of Sin and Death works in us ? But in Heaven, Mortality shall be swallowed up of Life. The Inhabitant of that City shall say no more, I am sick ; for Sin, with all its Effects, shall be for ever destroy'd. God will root the Being of Sin out of our Nature, at Death ; and perfect Conformity to Christ shall take the Place that Sin once had in our Souls : And he'll deliver our Bodies too from the Dominion of Death, at the Resurrection-morn, fashioning them *like unto the glorious Body of Christ.* And then Sin and Death will, apparently, be swallow'd up in the Victory of everlasting Life. Oh the Glory of that State, when we shall never have a vain Thought more ! an un-believing Thought more ! a heartless, list-less Thought for God more ! But shall have our whole Souls intensely fixt upon him, beholding his bright Face, fir'd with love to him, and fill'd with Zeal for his Glory, ascending like a perpetual Flame, in eternal *Hallelujahs !* Then we shall be fitted for Glory indeed, both in its Enjoyment and Employment. We shall see the Lamb's Face, and the Face of God in him, and cast down our *Crowns before the Throne,* while we ascribe Salvation, Glory and Honour unto God and the Lamb for ever.

ever. We shall then be able to bear that *Weight of Glory*, which is now prepared for us ; which, was it to be let out upon us here, would crush our weak Nature, and break down our feeble Frame, under the majestick Greatness thereof. This *new Wine of Glory* would *burst our old Bottles*, the old Frame of our Nature. And therefore the *Vessels of Mercy* must be *prepar'd* for, before they are fill'd with Glory ; and when we are *prepar'd* for it, we shall *everlastingly be fill'd with it*. God the Father *prepar'd* us for *Glory*, in his Eternal Choice of us in his Son, fore-appointing us to that great End. God the Son *prepar'd* us for *Glory*, when, in Love to the Church, he *gave himself for it*, that he might *sanctify and cleanse it with the Washing of Water by the Word*, that he might *present it unto himself a glorious Church*, not having *Spot or Wrinkle or any such thing*. And God the Holy Ghost prepares us for *Glory*, by that *good Work of Conformity to Christ*, which he hath *begun in us*, and will *perfect* upon us, both in Soul and Body. And when, from the Love of God, in his three glorious Persons, we are fully made *meet for our Inheritance*, we shall enjoy it : As soon as ever we are come to Age, we shall enter upon the full Possession of that incon-

inconceiveable Glory, and endless Life we have in the L.O.R.D, as our *Portion* !

Lift up thy Head therefore, my dear Sister, under all the Trials thou meetst with in this present Time ; for the Lord, by these, is preparing thee for endless Glory. The *everlasting Arms* are *underneath*, to support thee ; they are round about, to embrace and defend thee ; and they are always at Work upon thee, to polish and prepare thee for Glory, by every Stroke that toucheth thee. And tho' Trials may be grieving to thy frail Flesh; yet thy God will exercise thy Faith, and every Grace by 'em, and make them to yield thee *the peaceable Fruit of Righteousness*, in that *Crown of Life*, which the Lord has *promis'd to them that love him*, when they are fully try'd. Therefore endure Temptation, looking to the Glory which shall be reveal'd ; for there is a peculiar Blessedness attending it. When a new Trial comes, think thus with thyself ; ' Now my God is about to ' make me more like Christ ; 'tis the ' boundless Love of my Father's Heart, ' that gives me this Cross to bear ; that so ' I might be conformable unto Christ in ' Sufferings : Looking therefore unto my ' Lord, who *dur'd his Cross for the Joy ' set*

' set before him, and leaning upon his
 ' Strength, I'll take up mine, and bear it
 ' after him, until I reach Glory with him'.
 Gold must be refin'd from its Dross, be-
 fore it can shine forth in its native Glory.
 So must the Saints, in the Furnace of
 Affliction, before they shine forth in that
 Glory which shall follow. Therefore prize
 your Trials, and be thankful for 'em ; for
 they all *work together for your Good*, un-
 der the efficacious Influence of eternal Love,
 infinite Wisdom, and almighty Power.
 And since our *light Affliction* which is *but*
for a Moment, worketh for us *a far more*
exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory ;
 what Cause have we to rejoice in Christ
 now ? and *to comfort one another with these*
Words, that *we shall, ere long, be for ever*
with him ?

Fare ye well in the Lord. In him, with
dear Love, I am yours for ever, &c.

LETTER XVI.

To Mr. C.

Honour'd Brother,

Grace and Peace from God our Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord.

Your God is *the God of Peace*; and your Jesus, the Lord of Peace, the King of Peace; that made Peace for all his Subjects, and gives it to 'em by the blessed Spirit, as the Comforter. Having therefore *your Feet shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace*, go on cheerfully thro' a World of Trials, and fear none of the rugged Way you meet with. For having *Peace with God, thro' Jesus Christ*, and your Faith cloth'd herewith, you may safely tread your roughest Way, as being well fenc'd and secur'd from all harm. Remember, if your Trials are great, and your Way thorny, your *Shoes* shall be *Iron and Brass*, and *as your Days, your Strength*: You shall have Strength proportionable unto every Day of Trial. What tho' you have no Strength of your own, to endure the least

least Affliction, to the Glory of God ; yet you have Strength enough in your Head : Say therefore, in Faith, as it was long ago foretold, *In the LORD have I Strength*, Isa. xlv. 24. For unless the everlasting Strength of JEHOVAH could fail, you shall not want fresh Supplies when you are just ready to faint. No, *he giveth Power to the Faint, and to them that have no Might he increaseth Strength. And they that wait upon the LORD, shall renew their Strength, they shall run and not be weary, and walk and not faint* : And if they meet with Trials, which are like mighty Mountains in their Way, they shall *mount up with Wings as Eagles*, and fly over them, Isa. xl. 29, 31. Therefore fear none of your Trials : For infinite Wisdom ordain'd 'em, infinite Love bestows 'em, and almighty Power over-rules them for the Glory of God, and your Advantage. Grieve you they may ; but destroy you they cannot. And learn, my dear Brother, to look for your Peace where it is, even in the Bosom of Christ : *In me, says he, ye shall have Peace.* He has told you, that *in the World ye shall have Tribulation* : therefore think it no strange Thing. For all God's Children have their Trials, those very Trials which were appointed for them. Therefore say, with Job, *He performeth*

formeth the Thing that is appointed for me,
 Chap. xxiii. 14. Those very Trials you
 meet with were fore-appointed for you, as
 a Means to try and exercise your Graces.
 Your kind Father designs to make you a
Partaker of his Holiness, by every Chastise-
 ment that passeth over you. He designs
 your *Profit* herein, to brighten and increase
 your Graces, and thereby to prepare you
 for your future Crown.

And if you find your Afflictions to be a
 Means of sending you oftner to the Throne,
 and exercising your Graces ; if you learn
 Obedience by the Things you suffer ;
 you have great Reason to bless God for
 them, and for a sanctify'd Use of 'em.
 And don't let Satan rob God of the Glory,
 nor you of the Comfort, of his Kindness to
 you herein. For Afflictions could work no
 Good in thy Heart or Life, if God did not
 work by 'em. And that God that works
 by 'em, could as well work without 'em,
 was it his Pleasure. He could fill our Hearts
 brimful of Grace, without Trials as a
 Means, was it his Will. But since infinite
 Wisdom saw it meet, that *thro' much Tribu-*
lation we should *enter the Kingdom*, let us
 submit with Thankfulness, and like the
 Way that leads to so glorious an End. God
 did not appoint Affliction merely for its
 own

own sake, but as a Means to purify his Children. By this, says the Lord, shall the Iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the Fruit to take away his Sin, Isa. xxvii.

9. Fiery Trials are to brighten our Graces, and consume our Dross. Rejoice therefore, as knowing that *Tribulation worketh Patience*, (It works it, because God having appointed it as a Means, works by it unto this End) *and Patience, Experience; and Experience, Hope*, Rom. v. 3, 4. And as our God designs to increase our Graces by Affliction; so to prevent us from Sin thereby. And 'tis wondrous Grace to be either prevented or restor'd from Sin, by any Trial we meet with. The Lord knoweth that our Hearts are *bent to Backsliding* from him ; and therefore, in infinite Grace, he says, *I will hedge up thy Way with Thorns, and make a Wall, that she shall not find her Paths. And she shall follow after her Lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find 'em*, Hos. ii. 6, 7.

Here's preventing Mercy stopping up our Way of sinful Delight in the Creatures. But what would all this do upon our Spirits, if God was not to work upon our Hearts in these thorny Dispensations ? Why, just nothing at all that is good : We should not get

get a jot nearer the Bosom of God thereby, but rather, like the Wicked, fret under his Hand, and blaspheme his Name. But behold, that same Grace that hedgeh up our Way with Thorns, and thereby prevents us from taking up our Rest in the Creatures, doth absolutely engage to work efficaciously upon our Souls, in turning them to God by these thorny Providences ; as it follows,

Then shall she say, I will go and return to my first Husband, for then it was better with me than now, [Then] shall she say : When ? why, when her Way is hedg'd up, when all the Creatures she seeks to delight herself in, scratch and wound her. Aye, and then she [shall] say, (it is not said, she will say ; but she shall say) Efficacious Grace will make her say : And what shall she say ? Why ; I will go and return unto my first Husband ; for then was it better with me than now. Here's God's shall, before her, I will : Efficacious Grace secures her Will, and sweetly allures her into the Bosom of God, under fresh Discoveries of his Relation to her, as her Husband ; giving her a quick Remembrance of that infinite Sweetness she once tasted in him, and a delightful Prospect of those transcendent Privileges, which are only to be enjoy'd in Communi-

on

on with him. *I will go and return to my first Husband ; for then was it better with me than now.* 'Tis as if she should say, ' The Creatures grieve me, and I do but wound my self, in seeking Delight in 'em : ' *I'll go therefore unto Christ, my first Husband,* who is all Love, as well as Loveliness, and will therefore readily receive me again ; *for it was better with me when I lived in his Bosom, than it is now* I have forsaken him : I'll therefore return again unto him, as my complacent Rest, my Soul-satisfying All.'

And, Oh, happy Souls, who are thus wrought upon under Trials, and brought to the Bosom of God by Afflictions ! Has this been thy Case, my dear Brother ? *It is the Lord's doing, and let it be marvellous in thy Eyes.* If he brings thee to himself, what matter how ? And be assur'd, that none of thy Afflictions, whether from within or from without, could, of themselves, bring thee to the Bosom of God under any Trial. No, 'tis he himself that brings thee, whenever thou art brought. Praise his Name therefore, in that he deals with thee as a Child, blessing his Rod, to make thee holy. The Ungodly never have one sanctify'd Affliction in their whole Course : But unto us that believe in Jesus, Afflictions are Firing-Pots, to make us bright and glorious.

They

They are all Mercies to us : They flow from Mercy, they are manag'd by Mercy, and they end in Mercy : For God cannot be disappointed of his Design therein ; to wit, his own Glory, and our special Advantage. There is something to be done upon us in all the Changes which pass over us : One Providence has one Thing to do upon us ; another, another ; and God, in and by all, is working us up into Conformity to Christ in Holiness, in order to our being conformed unto him in Glory. And whatever he does with us, he is still carrying on our Salvation, in that Way which infinite Wisdom sees best for us. Therefore *cast thy Care upon him that careth for thee* ; and follow thy Lord in all his Ordinances, and in all his Providences : For thy dear Lord Jesus will be thy Guide and sweet Companion thro' the Wilderness, until he bring thee home to Glory, and set thee before his Father's Face, in whose *Presence is Fulness of Joy, and Rivers of Pleasure for evermore.* Say with David, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. *Altho' my House be not so with God ; yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, order'd in all things and sure : For this is all my Salvation, and all my Desire, altho' he make it not to grow.* I am,

with dear Love, yours in the Lord, &c.

L E T-

LETTER XVII.

To Mrs. B.

Dear and Honour'd Sister,

Grace unto you, and Peace be multiply'd from God our Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord.

Having heard of thy Distress, by reason of the Loss of near Relatives, it was on my Heart to write a few Lines unto thee. And I would say unto you, as our dear Lord to his Disciples, *let not your Heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*, John xiv.27. Be not troubled for the Loss of your dear Relations : For it is the Lord's Hand that took them away ; and he has done all things well ; well, for his own Glory, and well, for your Soul's Advantage : He has done all so well, that nothing could be better than it is. You know he has a sovereign Right to give Mercies to his Creatures, or take them away as he pleases ; but he exerciseth this Sovereignty towards his Children, in a way of special Love and Grace. And if you cou'd believe stedfastly the Love of your Father's Heart, in these smart Strokes

Strokes of his Hand ; you would see no Cause to be angry, like *Jonah*, for the Loss of his *Gourd*, Chap. iv. 9. but rather, to say, with *Eli*, *It is the LORD : let him do what seemeth him good*, 1 Sam. iii. 18. And with *Job*, *the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away ; blessed be the Name of the LORD*, Chap. i. 21. But, my dear Sister, I trust you are not angry at what the Lord has done, but only troubled for your Loss.

But as to this consider, you have not lost your God ; you have Him still ; and in having Him you have all, even in the Want of all ; and therefore need not be much troubled. Let them be at their Wits End, and break their Hearts for the Loss of Creatures, who have no Interest in God : But as for us, that have the *LORD* for our Portion, we are so rich, that we can never be made poor ; and so happy, that we have always Cause of rejoicing ; and it well becomes us, when we have nothing of the Creature to rejoice in, to possess all Things in *GOD*, and glory in Him as our **ALL** ! May not Christ say to thee, my dear Sister, as *Elkanah* to *Hannah*, *Why weepest thou ? and why eatest thou not ? and why is thy Heart grieved ? Am not I better to thee than ten Sons ?* 1 Sam. i. 8. Is not

Christ better than ten Sons ? Infinitely better than all the Creatures, both in the upper and lower Worlds ? And hast thou him, and yet troubled ! Oh wipe thy Eyes, and weep no more for the Loss of the Creature, when thou hast the Creator ! for the Shadow, when thou hast the Substance ! for a Beam, when thou hast the Body of the Sun ! for the Stream, when thou hast the Fountain ! and for a Drop, when thou hast the Ocean ! If there is not enough in Christ to fill thy Heart with Gladness, then go on to mourn ; but if there is, pass off from the Creatures, run to his Bosom, and solace thyself with his infinite Sweetness, his boundless Excellencies, and his incomprehensible Glory ! Are the Creatures gone ? Thou hast not lost much ; nay, nothing of that full and comprehensive Happiness, which God has prepar'd for thee in his Son. Hadst thou once some Sweetness in the Creatures, and dost thou now want it ? Care not much for it ; since Christ stands in all Relations to thee, and will fill them up with his own infinite Sweetness, thro' Time, and to Eternity. There are no Comforts in the Creatures, but what God puts into 'em ; and none to be enjoy'd in them, but what are mixt with Crosses. But in Christ, there's Joy without Sorrow, Light without Darkness, Sweet without Bitter,

Bitter, and Life without an End ! Thy Husband, Christ, ever lives, and ever loves ; and because he *lives*, thou *thou shalt live also* ; thy Life is secur'd in his. Think but, in Faith, what Christ is to thee, has done, and will do for thee ; and I dare say thou'l want none but him, to make thy Happiness complete. He has infinite Bowels to compassionate and succour thee in all thy Distresses ; infinite Wisdom, to order all Things for the best for thee ; infinite Patience, to pass by all thy Provocations ; infinite Mercy, to forgive all thy innumerable Transgressions ; infinite Fulness, to supply all thy Wants ; infinite Power, to defend thee from all Harms, and save thee from all Misery unto all Glory ; and in infinite Faithfulness, he *will never leave, nor forsake thee* ! Others may leave thee, but *Christ* will never fail thee. Friends may stand *a-loof from thy Sore* ; but *Christ* will know thy Soul in *Adversity*. Yea, saith he, the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed ; but my Kindness shall not depart from thee, nor the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the *LORD*, that hath Mercy on thee, Isa. liv. 10. And what canst thou want more ? Oh, nothing but Enjoyment of *Christ*, to make thee perfectly happy ! Labour therefore, to live upon him, as thy

Time-Portion, as well as thy eternal ALL: For this will be for his Glory, and thy Comfort. It will be for the Glory of thy Lord, if thou put him for a Well, a never-failing Well of Consolation, while thou art passing thro' the *Valley of Baca*, this World of Trials ; and in acquainting thyself with him, thou shalt have Peace ; such *Peace* that the *World* can neither give, nor take, such *Joy* that a *Stranger intermeddles not with*,

‘ Aye, sayst thou, but this is my Misery,
 ‘ I am so chain’d down to Sense, and sensible Enjoyments, that my Soul is oft in
 ‘ Prison, and I cannot come forth into the
 ‘ Liberty and Sweetness of my Lord’s
 ‘ Bosom’. Well, if this be thy Case, Christ can come to thee, when thou canst not come to him : He can come *leaping on the Mountains, skipping in the Hills* ; those Hills of Difficulty, which are too great for thee to climb over to get to him ; and such his Grace, that he will come. *I will not leave you comfortless*, says he, *I will come unto you*, John xiv. 18. And if Christ comes unto us, he brings all Salvation with him : He brings Life, Light, Liberty, Joy, Glory, all that our Souls can want. He can, with a Word of his Mouth, break our Bands asunder, knock off our Fetters, strengthen

strengthen our weak Faith, and give us
 Access, in an Instant, into the glorious Li-
 berty of the Sons of God. So mighty is
 our Beloved, that he *can* do it; so gracious,
 and so faithful, that he *will* do it. Thy
 Maker, thy Husband, will have compassion
 upon thee in all thy Soul-Distresses, as well
 as in all thy outward Troubles; and he'll
 comfort thee in all thy Tribulation. Thy
 dear Lord Jesus will be thy Companion
 all the Way thro' the Wilderness: Do
 not think that thou art left to go thro' the
 World alone: No, thou hast thy Beloved
 with thee, to conduct, support, comfort, and
 protect thee in thy Passage home to Glory.
 And when thou dost not see his Face, be-
 lieve it, his Heart is the same towards thee
 as ever; and thou art then call'd to live
 by Faith, rejoicing in Hope of the Glory
 of God: For tho', *for a small Moment he*
may forsake thee, as to his sensible Presence,
 yet, (as he'll never forsake thee as to his
 real, gracious Presence, so) *with everlasting*
Kindness he will have Mercy upon thee: And
 he'll quickly take thee up to Glory, where
 thou shalt see his Face, without the least
 Cloud to interpose for ever. And then he'll
wipe all Tears from thy Eyes, and open the
 Mystery of his Providences, which here
 thou hast been try'd with, as having been

all consistent with his everlasting Kindness towards thee, and subservient to thy eternal Salvation. Therefore lift up thy Head ; for what thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with thy Spirit. *Amen. I am,*
with dear Love, yours in him, &c.

L E T T E R XVIII.

To Mrs. L.

Dear Friend,

NO T having Ability of Body to give you a Visit, I was willing to write a Line to you under your present Concern. And I would say unto thee, as *Paul and Silas* to the Jaylor, *Acts* xvi. 31. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* God the Father, from his great Love to poor Sinners, even when they were *dead in Sins*, did give his own Son to be their Saviour ; he call'd him to this work, and anointed him for it ; and when he sent him forth into the World, he gave *this Commandment* to lost Sinners, that they *should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ,*

Christ, 1 John iii. 23. And this is the Will of him that sent me, saith our Lord, that every one that feeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting Life, John vi. 40. And this Lord Jesuſ is infinitely able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, who come unto God by him, Heb. viii. 25. And to ſhew that he is as willing as he is able, he ſays, *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest, Matt. xi. 28.* And he has given the highest Assurance of Happiness unto that Soul which believes in him : *John vi. 46. Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that believeth on me, bath everlasting Life.* And believing on *Christ* is, looking unto him for Salvation : *Isa. xlvi. 22. Committing the Soul into his Hands, to be kept from eternal Mifery, and brought unto eternal Glory, 1 Tim. i. 12.* 'Tis truſting in his Name, *Matt. xii. 21.* and reſting upon him, as the Foundation God has laid in Sion; or'tis the Soul's laying the whole Weight and Stress of its Salva-tion, building all its Hope of Life upon *Christ* alone, from a discerning of his Preciousness, as that Rock againſt which the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail, &c. *1 Cor. iii. 11. 1 Peter ii. 7. Matt. xvi. 18.*

Well then, doſt thou ſee thyſelf to be utterly undone by reaſon of Sin ? Here's a

Saviour provided, and a great One : Look unto him, and thou shalt live for ever. However great thy Sins are in themselves, or appear to be in thy View, they are not too great to be pardon'd ; *Christ* is infinitely greater, as a Saviour, than thou canst be as a Sinner. He is mighty to save ; yea, almighty. He says, *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the Ends of the Earth*, Isa. xlvi. 22. He commands Sinners at the greatest Distance, to look unto him the great Saviour ; and unto every Soul that looks, he says, *Be ye saved* : He is so mighty to save, that he saves with a Word of his Mouth. And that because he is God ; as it follows there ; *for I am God, and there is none else*. So that his Almightiness, as God, is engag'd to save every Soul that looks unto him for Life. Yea, all the Perfections of his Nature are engag'd for the Salvation of that Soul ; his infinite Love, Mercy, Wisdom, Truth, Faithfulness, &c. And is not here enough to save thee ? Look to him therefore, and thou shalt be saved. Thou shalt be saved, whoever says nay : If Satan says nay, or if thy unbelieving Heart says nay, it matters not ; Christ's Word shall stand, and bring all Salvation to thee, notwithstanding all the Opposition that can be made against it. He would have thee look
to

to him as God ; and that will answer all thy Objections. What are all thy *Crimson* and *Scarlet-dy'd* Sins, before the infinite Merit of his Blood, that *cleanseth from all Sin ! Isa. i. 18.* *1 John i. 7.* What's all the Power of thy spiritual Enemies, before the omnipotent Strength of the L O R D thy Saviour ! who *travels in the Greatness of his Strength* to save Sinners, and *tread* down their Enemies ! *Isa. lxii. 1.* What is all thy Unworthiness and Sinfulnes, before free, reigning Grace, and boundless Mercy, in its glorious Superaboundings ! *Rom. v. 21.* *1 Tim. i. 14.* If the Lord will be gracious to thee, and will shew Mercy on thee ; who, or what shall hinder it ? Remember, he will be gracious to thee as G O D ; and if thou wantest all the Mercy and Grace that is in him to save thee, thou shalt have it, if thou lookest, as a perishing Sinner, unto *Christ* alone for Salvation. When *Christ* saves a Sinner, he does it *with his whole Heart, and his whole Soul,* *Jer. xxxii. 40, 41.* Every one he saves is as much interested in all the Grace of the Saviour for his Salvation, as if *Christ* had never another in the World to save, besides him. And what thinkest thou now ? Is all the Grace that is in *Christ*, enough to

save thee ? Believest thou that he is able to do this ? Aye, sayst thou, if I was one of his ; but that I am afraid of.

Well, if thou canst not come to him as a Child ; come, as the Woman of Canaan, who thought herself to be as unworthy as a *Dog*, and plead for the *Crumbs* which fall from the Childrens Table ; and *Christ* will say unto thee, as he did unto her, *O Woman, great is thy Faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt*, Matt. xv. 27, 28. Come therefore, come as thou canst, with all thy Misery, and cast thyself down at Jesus Feet, and thou shalt find Mercy. For *he that believeth on him, shall never be confounded*.

I Peter ii. 6. Seek the LORD therefore, while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near. For he hath said, *Let the Wicked forsake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts ; and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have Mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*, Isa. lv. 6, 7. Come therefore, come, and try what infinite Mercy will do for thee : For there never was any poor, needy Soul that came to the *Throne of Grace to find Mercy*, however great his Sins and his Wants were, that was sent away empty, nor shall be, unto the *World's End* ; since *Christ ever liveth to save them*

to the uttermost, who come unto God by him,
Heb. vii. 25.

Wishing Grace, Mercy, and Peace may
be multiply'd unto thee, in the Manifesta-
tion of free Pardon, to the filling of thy
Heart with Joy unspeakable, and full of
Glory, *I am,*

with dear Love, thine in the Lord, &c.

LETTER XIX.

To Mr. W. G.

*Dear Brother, whom I love, and honour
in the Lord,*

YOUR Labour of Love, which you
have shewed towards his Name,
Gospel, and Cause in B--s, shall be abun-
dantly own'd, and crown'd in the Day of
Christ; when you shall find, to your un-
speakable Joy and Glory, that none of
your Labour has been in vain in the Lord.
Wherefore be stedfast, unmoveable, always
abounding therein. I rejoice that the Lord
has given you a large Heart, and an open
Hand for him, who gave himself, his great
Self for you. Surely I can say, with *De-*

borah, My Heart is toward the Governors of Israel, that offer'd themselves willingly to the Help of the Lord, Judg. v. 9, 23. I am glad that the Love of Christ constrains you to give up yourself and your all unto him. And, believe it, my dear Brother, you shall lose nothing by it. Our Lord has told us, that *a Cup of cold Water given to a Disciple, in the Name of a Disciple, or because he belongs to Christ, shall in no wise lose its Reward.* And when he appears the second Time, without Sin, unto Salvation, he comes to give Rewards unto his Servants, and to all that fear him, both small and great, according to their Works. And oh, how brightly shall the Saints then shine in the Kingdom of their Father, with a proportionable Glory, unto all their various Services which they have been enabled to do for God in this present State !

'Tis true we owe ourselves, and our all, had we ten thousand times more than we have, to our dear L O R D ; whom we can never, no not to Eternity, sufficiently love, serve, and honour, for what he is in himself, unto us, and has done for us : So that our utmost Service is our Duty ; and could we do all that is commanded, we should still be but *unprofitable Servants : For who hath given him, (in a Way*

Way of Desert or Merit) and it shall be recompensed to him again? No, all Flesh here must be silent before the L O R D of G L O R Y ! And the Saints have such a Sight of the Lamb's Worthiness, and of their own Unworthiness, that their Mouths, of all other, are stopped; they'll never open their Mouth before him, and say, we have done many mighty Works in thy Name, which deserve thy Notice: No, the Remembrance of their own Shame, together with the Soul-ravishing Prospects of his Glory, will make them shrink to nothing before his infinite Majesty, Love and Grace, in the Review of their best Services; saying, *Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee?* &c. *Ezek. xvi. 63. Matt. xxv.*

37.

But yet, such is the boundless Grace of our Lord and Master, our Friend and Brother, our Head and Husband, that none of our Services, no not the least that we are enabled to do for him, shall go unrewarded. He'll call the Performance of our Duty, Kindness; the Acts of our Service, Friendship; *Jer. ii. 2. Jam. ii. 21, 23.* And infinite Love will reward 'em, according to the Estimate it puts upon them. *Ye are they, saith our Lord, which have continued with me in my Temptations. And I appoint*

unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me : That you may eat and drink at my Table in my Kingdom, and sit on Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel, *Luke xxii. 28, 29, 30.* Oh, infinite Grace ! How will our Lord honour his Servants ! He calls us *Friends* ; and then advanceth us as such. He works all our Works in us and by us, and then calls 'em ours. He enables us to overcome, and then crowns us as Overcomers ; granting us to sit with him in his Throne, as he overcame, and is set down with his Father in his Throne. And herein he acts like himself, as the God of all Grace ! while every Saint shall receive his own Reward, according to his own Labour, *Rev. iii. 21. 1 Cor. iii. 8.* Blessed then are those Servants, which can do most for Christ in this Day ; since, in that Day of his Kingdom, he'll gird himself, make them sit down to Meat, and come forth and serve them, *Luke xii. 37.* A Phrase that has more Grace in it, than we can take in ! Wherefore, my beloved Brother, *Stand fast in the LORD*, abounding in his Work ; as having respect unto the Recompense of the REWARD !

Wishing you may have the Joy, as a Friend of the Bridegroom, to see him have the

the Bride, (in the Success of the Gospel,
in the Conversion of many in B---s)

I am, with dear Love, and due Respect,
Yours in the Lord, &c.

LETTER XX.

To Mrs. S.

Dear and honour'd Sister,

Grace unto you, and Peace be mul-
tiplied.

It is the Pleasure of the Lord, your Fa-
ther, to lay his chastning Hand upon your
Body ; but since this very Chastisement
flows from the boundless Love of his Heart,
and was determin'd by his infinite Wisdom,
for his own Glory and your Advantage,
receive it with Thankfulness. You'll bleſs
God for it, when you come to Heaven ;
and see how needful it was for you to paſs
this Way, thro' this Affliction, to Glory :
Therefore begin the Work of Praise now.
The Lord's Design herein, is not to destroy,
but to refine you ; to make you more con-
formable unto Christ, your glorious Head,
in Suffering : And as Christ firſt ſuffered,
and

and then entred into his Glory, so must you. There's a Glory to follow the Sufferings of Christ mystical, as there was of Christ personal. The Members must have Fellowship with their Head, first in Sufferings, and then in Glory: *For if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorify'd together,* Rom. viii. 17. We should look upon the Sufferings of Christ with a double View.

First, As he suffered in our stead, to satisfy Justice, and bring us to God, 1 Peter iii. 18. And so, we don't suffer with him. No, blessed be God, *of the People there was none with him, in this respect,* Isa. lxiii. 3. Our mighty Mediator, on whom the Father *laid Help*, stood alone, in the Greatness of his Strength, as God-Man, under the inexpressible Weight of our Sins, and his Father's Wrath, pour'd out upon him thro' the Curses of a broken Law; issuing in that overflowing Deluge of Afflictions which he endur'd, when for us he became the *Man of Sorrows*; when he was wounded for our *Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities.* And hereby he has for ever satisfy'd Law and Justice, and fully taken away the Curse out of all our Afflictions: For having drank up the Wrath-Cup, he left not one Drop for us. So that in this respect, we don't suffer with him: No, such

such was the boundless Grace of God towards us, that he suffer'd, and we go free ! But then,

Secondly. Christ also suffer'd for us, leaving us an Example, that we should follow his Steps, 1 Peter ii. 21. It became him of whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in the bringing many Sons unto Glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect thro' Sufferings, Heb. ii. 10. It was a Design becoming the infinite Wisdom of Jehovah, to make his own Son, as the Captain of their Salvation, the great Leader of his People, *perfect thro' Sufferings.* God ordain'd his own Son, in his assumed Man-Nature, first to *suffer*, and then to *enter into his Glory*; first to pass thro' all Sufferings, and therein to exercise all Graces, and at the End of his Race to be crown'd with all Glory; that so he might become the great Pattern of Obedience unto all his junior Brethren, and the Exemplar of that Glory, which they shall arrive unto, when their suffering State is ended, as 1 Peter ii. 11, 12, 13. with Heb. xii. 2. And as Christ's Sufferings are propos'd as an Example of our Obedience, and we enabled to tread in his Steps; so the Head and Members have a Community in Sufferings. Or, we may be said to suffer with him, as I humbly

humblly conceive, in these four Respects : 1. In that the Origin, Source, Spring-head, or first Rise of Sufferings, both to Christ and us, is the Father's Love. 2. In that we bear Afflictions, under the Influences of the same Spirit, in our Measure, as Christ did. 3. In that we have the same End in View, in our patient enduring Affliction, to wit, the Glory of God, as Christ had. And, 4. In that our Sufferings serve as a Foil to set off the Glory which shall succeed 'em, as Christ's did. Suffering, both to Christ and us, while by the same Spirit we learn Obedience under it, is but a Preparation for Glory : As the dark Ground, the Limner says, is in order to commend and set off the fair and beautiful Colours which he designs to draw upon it. And Oh, how glorious will Christ, whole Christ, Head and Members be, when all that Glory is laid upon 'em, which was ordain'd to follow their Sufferings ! *Oh thou Afflicted, tossed with Tempest, and not comforted, Behold,* saith the Lord, *I will lay thy Stones with fair Colours, &c.* Isa. lxiv. 11, 12. And Oh, how glorious will the Church appear, in the *New Jerusalem State*, when this Promise shall have its full Accomplishment, when the *fair Colours* of Glory are laid upon her *Stones*, which before were carv'd, and prepar'd by Affliction

Affliction to receive it ! Affliction, to God's People, under the Management of infinite Wisdom and Grace, is like the Carving of Letters in Stone, in order to overlay 'em with Gold.

Well, my dear Sister, since you suffer with Christ, you need not be very sorrowful under it ; you have a sweet Companion in all your Tribulation. Your dear Lord Jesus interests himself in all your Sorrows ; *I was sick, &c.* says he, *Matt. xxv. 36.* And, says *Paul*, *I fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Christ in my Flesh*, *Col. i. 24.* Since this Affliction in your Flesh is Christ's, fear not a glorious Issue. You are one of those Sons that are to be brought to Glory ; and in Conformity to the First-born of the Family, you are to be lov'd home, thro' Affliction. *Christ* has gone before us, thro' Affliction and Death, up to Glory ; and taken the Curse and Bitterness out of our Pains, and the Sting out of our Death ; and now 'tis sweet following our Fore-runner, who is for us entered into the Presence of his and our Father. I say, following of him ; because our Faith is to eye *Christ* as gone before us into Glory. But let us not think that he is so gone, as to leave us alone in a World of Trials. No, no ; we have our Beloved with

with us, his Arms to lean on, and his Bosom to rest in, all the Way we come up from the Wilderness. He has said, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,* Heb. xiii. 5. And the Grace and Faithfulness of this Promise secure his Presence with us, thro' Life, thro' Death, and to Eternity. And if the Lord is with us, who, or what need we fear? So that we may boldly say, *The Lord is my Helper, I will not fear what any Creature, or thing, can do unto me.* For neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, Rom. viii. 38, 39.

And now, that you may be strengthened with all Might, unto all Patience, and Long-suffering with Joyfulness, is the earnest Desire of,

Your humble Servant in the Lord, &c.

LETTER XXI.

To Mrs. K.

Dear friend, and honour'd Sister,

I Beg leave to return humble and hearty
 Thanks to you and Mr. K. for all
 that great Kindness you have shewn to the
 Cause of Christ here, in its low Estate ;
 and unto us the least in our Father's House.
 And be assur'd, that none of your Labour
 Love shall in any wise lose its Reward.
 The Lord abundantly inrich your Souls
 with his Grace, and cause you to inherit
 Substance, the *true Riches*, where neither
*Moth nor Rust can corrupt, nor Thieves break
 thro' to steal*. All things here are Shadows,
 that have nothing in them suited to the
 Nature of an immortal Soul : The best of
 worldly Enjoyments are empty, and pas-
 sing away ; but the Riches of Christ, are
 both durable and unsearchable ! And oh
 that the Lord, the Spirit, may give unto
 you a Sight of your Interest in those im-
 mense Treasures ! If we have Christ, we
 have all ; all for Time, and all for Eternity !
 Oh the exceeding Preciousness of Christ !
 and

and the Happiness of that Soul who is interested in him ! Neither Men nor Angels can tell it out. The whole World, with all the Variety of Creatures and Things in it, can't fill the Heart of one Man. But One Christ can fill the largest Soul, yea, Millions of them, both in the upper and lower Worlds, at once : Because his Fulness is infinite ! Oh, what a *goodly Heritage* have they, that have Christ for their *Portion* ! And how happy are they who love him most, and serve him best ! Oh, what a glorious Master is Jesus Christ ! who makes all his Servants *Kings* ! who has *Thrones* and *Crowns* for every one of them ; who pardons all their Sins, accepts all their weak Services, and in infinite Grace rewards them ! Yea, that gives them no less than his great SELF ! and the eternal Enjoyment of him, as their exceeding Great REWARD ! What a Thraldom is the Service of Sin, and how doth it debase and ruin the Soul ! But the Service of Christ is perfect Freedom, and the highest Honour ! The whole Hosts of Angels and Arch-angels, with the *Spirits of just Men*, now made perfect in Heaven, think it both their Honour and Happiness to serve and glorify Jesus Christ. What an Honour . . . then

then is it for a mortal, sinful Worm, to be admitted into the Service of this Great L O R D ! and a kind of Fellowship with the glorious Family above ! Oh, little doth the World think, what an Honour and Happiness it is to serve Christ Here ! nor yet what Glory he hath in reserve for his Servants hereafter ! Christ's Servants wear Royal Apparel, and are feasted as so many Princes, even here ; but the World don't see their Glory, nor know their Enjoyments, because they are of an heavenly Nature ; and so too bright and high to be discern'd by the natural Eye, or for the natural Man to conceive of ! Oh the amazing Difference Christ puts between his Servants, and the Servants of Sin and Satan, even in this World ! *Bebold, says he, my Servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry ; behold, my Servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty ; behold, my Servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed : Bebold, my Servants shall sing for Joy of Heart, but ye shall cry for Sorrow of Heart, and shall howl for Vexation of Spirit,* Isa. lxv. 13, 14. Christ's Servants have heavenly Manna to eat, a pure River of Water of Life to drink of, the Streams whereof fill them with Joy and Gladness, and make them break forth into singing, even in this World ; while
the

the Servants of Sin have just the Reverse. But oh, when Christ comes again, *in his Father's Glory, in his own Glory, and in the Glory of his holy Angels*, what a Difference will he put between 'em then ! When they that fear the LORD shall shine forth with an heavenly Splendor, as Jewels made up ; and have such an astonishing Glory put upon them, that the Ungodly, to their utmost Shame, and everlasting Confusion, shall *discern between the Righteous and the Wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not !* Mal. iii. 17, 18.

Wishing Grace and Peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, by the blessed Comforter ; *I am,*

with dear Love and Service to your whole Self, yours in the Lord for ever, &c.

LETTER XXII.

To Mrs. D.

Dear Sister,

Grace unto you, and Peace be multi-
Jplied.

Having heard, that you are much cast down in your Soul, under a Sense of your own Unworthiness, and afraid, on that account, that you are none of the Lord's ; I was willing, according to your Desire, to write a few Lines unto you. And this I would say to thee, that among all the innumerable Multitude of God's People, there never was, nor will be one that was saved, because they were worthy of God's Love, or of any its glorious Fruits. No; Salvation, from Foundation to Top-Stone, is all of one pure Piece of Grace. Free-Grace is the Chariot that conveys all God's Chosen home to Glory. If Salvation was of Works, and to be bestow'd upon condition of the Creature's Obedience and inherent Goodness, then you might be disengaged, if you saw the want of these things in yourself ; and conclude that there was no Salvation for you. But since Salvation is of Grace, free, absolute, unchangeable

ble and infinite Grace, why mayn't it be for thee? Thy Unworthiness can't hinder : Because Free-Grace delights to glorify its Riches, in saving to the uttermost, those that are most unworthy. God has concluded his Chosen, all *in Unbelief*, that he might have mercy upon all. And where Sin has abounded, Grace doth much more abound, Rom. xii. 31, and v. 20. How unreasonable then is it for thee to conclude that thou art not the Lord's, because thou art unworthy; when all his are such? Yea, let me say, there are none but his, that see themselves to be such.

As God's Design, from everlasting, was to glorify his Grace to the utmost, in saving a Remnant of poor Sinners, whom he had set his Heart upon, and chosen to Life Eternal ; so, *in the Fulness of Time*, he sent his Son to die for 'em ; and at the appointed Moment, when their personal Salvation is to begin, he sends forth his Spirit into their Hearts, to convince them of their Misery by Sin, and to shew them their great Unworthiness of any Favour, in order to make them willing to be beholding to his rich Mercy and Free-Grace for the whole of their Salvation.

For by Nature, all *Adam's Posterity* are under the Covenant of Works, and seek Life by the Deeds of the Law. And so blind

blind is proud Man, and so deceived by Satan, that he thinks there is some Goodness in his Heart or Life, which renders him worthy of divine Mercy and Favour ; which he dares to plead before God, as the *Pharisee, God, I thank thee, I am not as other Men* ; or, if this is not the Language of his Mouth, how often doth he *bless himself in his Heart*, in his supposed Goodness ? And so long as the Soul rests upon this Bottom, it is impossible for it to enjoy Salvation ; God's Way of saving Sinners, and the Way such a Soul would be saved in, being so diametrically opposite. ‘ I have done this and that, and the other, faith such a Soul, Lord, save me ’. There’s no Salvation, saith the Lord, by the Deeds of the Law ; I save none but miserable Sinners, that can do nothing to help themselves, but are utterly undone ; my Design is to glorify my Grace in saving such ; and no Soul shall perish, that is willing to be saved this Way ? But alas, an unregenerate Man don’t like this Way of Salvation : No, he chuses to cleave to the Works of the Law ; and living and dying in that State, being under the Curse, he must perish for ever.

But when God is about to apply Salvation to an elect Vessel, he empties such a

Soul of all its conceited Goodness, and gives it to see its own Ill-deservings, and Hell-deservings ; he shews it its Misery, and reveals the Remedy ; in order to make it willing to be saved in his own Way, and to fill it with Mercy, Grace, and Glory in this World, and that which is to come. *God be merciful to me a Sinner,* is the Plea of such a Soul. *I will be merciful to thy Unrighteousness, and thy Sins and thy Iniquities I will remember no more,* is the glorious Answer that it receives from the Lord. Salvation by Grace, the Soul pleads for : This is according to God's Heart, and the eternal Designs of his Kindness ; and Salvation by Grace, he bestows upon that Soul.

And is it thus with thee, my dear Sister ? Dost thou see thy own Vileness and Unworthiness, and desire to be saved alone by Grace : Be of good Comfort, for thou art a Vessel of Mercy ; prepared unto Glory. God's free, full, and everlasting Salvation was prepar'd for thee ; and thy Heart, by the Work of the Spirit, is prepar'd to receive it : And what then shall hinder thy Enjoyment of it ? Thou art certainly one of the Lord's ; or else thou hadst never been made willing to be saved in God's Way. Art thou *willing* to be saved by Jesus Christ ? 'Twas *in the Day of his Power*, that thy stubborn Will was subdued, and

and sweetly drawn into Subjection to himself, as the alone Saviour. Thy Salvation is already begun ; and fear not the full Accomplishment of it. Christ has saved thee, to Willingness ; and will give thee all that Salvation thy willing Soul desires. And what tho' thou art vile, and wretched in thyself ; there's Grace enough for thee in the Heart of God , and Salvation e-nough in the Person of Christ, which thou art call'd to receive freely. *Come therefore, boldly to the Throne of Grace ; for thou shalt find Mercy, and Grace to help in Time of Need, Heb. iv. 16. Open thy Mouth wide,* saith the Lord, the Desires of thy Soul, for all the Grace and Salvation thou needest, *and I will fill it,* Psal. lxxxi. 10. Thy Sins, tho' an huge Mass, yet, were they ten thousand times more and greater than they are,are no more, when cast into the infinite Grace of God, and the infinite Merit of Christ's Blood, than a small Stone to the immense Ocean ; which is no sooner cast therein, but it is cover'd, and swallow'd up of its unfathomable Depths ! Honour therefore the God-of all Grace, by believing his Grace sufficient to save thee, by casting thyself into the Arms of his Mercy, and by crediting his infinite Faithfulness, as a God that can-

not lie ; who has said, *they that trust in the LORD, shall be as Mount Zion, that shall never be removed : They shall never be ashamed nor confounded, World without End,* Psal. cxxv. 1. Isa. xlvi. 17.

And now, that the *God of Peace* may fill thee with all *Joy and Peace thro' Believing*, is the earnest Desire of

Thy Loving Friend in the Lord, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

To Mrs. B.

My very dear Sister,

MY Soul is troubled at the present Distress you are under. *If one Member suffer, all the rest sympathize.* But oh, the infinite Tenderness of your Head in Heaven ! Not a Sorrow pierceth your Heart, but he has an inward Feeling of it. And his Bowels yern towards you, even now there is such a Cloud upon his Face, and he seems to speak against you : He yet *earnestly remembers you still.* Ayé still, notwithstanding all the Contrarieties you see and feel in yourself. What tho' you

you have an Hell of Iniquity in your Nature, as much, in your Apprehension, as there can be even in the Devils themselves ; yet this alters not Christ's Heart towards you one jot. God has resolv'd that Sin shall never out-do his Grace ; but that *where Sin has abounded, Grace shall much more abound.* What tho' the Sin of your Nature appears, in your Sight, like a mighty Ocean, that would swallow you up ; yet 'tis no more than a Drop, if compar'd with the infinite Ocean of Christ's Love, and the Merit of his Blood, which has swallow'd up all your Sin. Your Heart can't be worse than what the Lord speaks of the Hearts of Men in general, Gen. vi. 5. *And God saw that the Wickedness of Man was great in the Earth, and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only evil, and that continually.* And yet this did not alter God's Heart to a Remnant in his Son, that were as bad as the rest. Your being as bad as them that perish, don't put you into a perishing State with them. And when God would set off the Greatness of his Love to his own People, he does it by putting them in mind of their being as bad by Nature as the rest, Mal. i. 2, 3. *Was not Esau Jacob's Brother ? Saith the Lord : Yet I loved Jacob.* So that there is no reason

for you to conclude, that you are not the Lord's, because you see yourself to be as bad as others.

But it may be, you'll say, “ tho' God's
 “ People are as bad as others by *Nature*,
 “ yet *Grace* makes a Difference ”.

"Tis true, there is a new Nature given ;
 but yet the old Nature remains in all its
 Parts and Branches. And if you had not a
 new Nature, you could not see that Mass
 of Iniquity in your old.

The Apostle, in the *seventh* of the *Romans*, cries out as a *wretched Man*, by reason of that *Body of Sin and Death* that dwelt in him. He complains not of this or that Member only, but of a *Body of Death*, in all its Parts and Members ; a complete Body of Sin dwelling in him. And yet, in the Triumph of Faith, could bless God for a complete Victory in Christ, over Sin and Death at the same Time.

But it may be, you will say, “ that the
 “ Carriage of your Soul towards God has
 “ been so foward and rebellious, that it
 “ can't agree with the Nature of a
 “ Child ”.

With the new nature of a Child, blessed be God, it cannot : For there is a Principle of Love in your Soul, that will make you
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lothe yourself in your own Sight, for all your Abominations ; when God breaks out upon your Spirit again, with shining Discoveries of abundant Pardon, and gives you to see that he is pacify'd towards you for all that you have done.

But that Frowardness and Rebellion may and doth agree with the old Nature that dwells in God's Children ; see, Isa. xlviij. 4. *Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and that thy Neck is an Iron Sinew, and thy Brow Brass.* And ver. 8. yea, thou heardest not, yea, thou knewest not, yea, from that time that thine Ear was not open'd : For I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast call'd a Transgressor from the Womb. And yet notwithstanding all this see the Grace that breaks forth in the next three Verses : *For my Name's sake will I defer mine Anger, and for my Praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.* Behold I have refined thee, but not with Silver ; I have chosen thee in the Furnace of Affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it ; for how should my Name be polluted ? and I will not give my Glory unto another. Who could have thought, that ever such an obstinate, stiff-necked, treacherous dealing one, that was a Transgressor from the Womb, should be called God's Chosen ? And that

he should resolve to refine such an one in the *Furnace of Affliction*, for his own Name's sake ; taking all his Motives from within himself, from his own Heart, when he could find none but the contrary in the Creature's Nature and Carriage ?

See also another Instance of God's Kindness to a foward Child, Isa. lvii. 17. *For the Iniquity of his Covetousness was I wroth, and smote him : I bid me, and was wroth, and he went on fowardly in the Way of his Heart.* What could one now think that the Lord should say concerning such an one, but I'll destroy him ? But oh ! Behold the Grace that straightway breaks forth towards this rebellious Creature ; *I have seen his Ways, and will heal him : I will lead him also, and restore Comforts unto him, and to his Mourners ! Ver. 18. I have seen his Ways :* (what Ways ?) “ Not his holy Ways ; for “ as if the Lord should say, he has pro-“ voked me by his Iniquity to smite him. “ Not his believing, submisive Ways ; for “ instead of learning Obedience by the “ things he suffers, he's worse and worse, “ more foward and rebellious under my “ chastning Hand. Nor yet his repenting “ Ways ; for instead of bemoaning himself “ under his Peevishnes, and turning to “ me

" me with all his Heart, he goes on forwardly, as in a Course of Fretfulness and Rebellion ; in the Ways of his own Heart, not in the Ways of my Precepts. And yet for all this, *I will heal him* : Tho' I might destroy him, if I was to deal with him after his Carriage towards me. I might say, go on in thy own Ways, to thy own Destruction ; and bring upon thyself deserved Ruin. But, in the Super-aboundings of my Grace, *I will heal him*. He has wounded himself, and is ready to die of his Wounds ; but I'll bind up his wounded Spirit. Darkness covers him, so that he can't see the Way of Faith, nor has he Strength to set one Foot forward therein ; but *I will lead him also*. I'll take him by the Arms, and support him under his present Weakness ; and also teach him to go again in my Ways, notwithstanding his present Ignorance. And tho' he has lost the Joys of my Favour, which had wont to be the Strength of his Spirit ; and thinks I am become his Enemy, because he finds so much Enmity in his carnal Mind against me : Yet my everlasting Kindness shall break forth upon him again, like the Sun from under an Eclipse, and fill his Heart brim-full of Joy, even

" to running over : For I will not only
 " restore *Comforts* to him, but to his Mour-
 " ners, who shall rejoice for his Conso-
 " lation".

What think you, my dear Sister, of this Grace ? It is sufficient to save you ; yea, let me say, it is more than enough. Had you ten thousand times more Sins than you have, you could never spend the exceeding Riches of Grace ; the Treasures of which, laid up in Christ for you, are inexhaustible. Grace is a Spring that can never be drawn dry ! 'Twill rise higher than your Sins, let them be ever so much exalted ; 'twill *spring up*, even *into everlasting Life*. Grace has *Depths*, infinitely deeper than the greatest Depths of your Sins and Miseries ! *Heights*, infinitely higher than the Heights of your Provocations ! *Breadths*, infinitely more extensive than the Aboundings of your Iniquities ! And *Lengths*, infinitely longer than your Sins, either in Commencement, or Duration ! Grace laid the Foundation of your Glory in Christ, before Time or Sin entred ; is now managing the Superstructure, by all the Changes which pass over you ; and will lay the Top-Stone, when Sin and Time shall be no more, out-living them to an endless Eternity ! I might multiply Instances of Grace ; but the Time would fail me,

me. The whole Gospel, both in the old and new Testament, is one entire Declaration of the Wonders of Grace, and the Depths of Mercy to unworthy Creatures, and miserable Sinners!

But it may be, in the Depth of your Distress, you'll *refuse to be comforted*, and say, " All this is not for me ".

But remember God's own dear Children have said so in times of Darkness, as you, who yet have been made to say the quite contrary, when the Light has broke out upon them again. When *Heman* was brought forth into the Light, and could call God, the God of his Salvation, read what an Account he gave of the Darkness he had been in, and what he said while it lasted. That he was *counted with them that go down to the Pit, free among the Dead*, &c. Psal. lxxxviii. And the Church, Lam. iii. 18. did say, in Unbelief, *My Strength and my Hope is perished from the LORD*. And yet, when God broke out upon her Spirit afresh, she could say, *the LORD is my Portion : therefore will I hope in him*. And from her own Experience, encourage others to *hope, and quietly wait for the Salvation of the LORD*; telling them, that *the LORD is Good to the Soul that seeketh him ; that he will not cast off for ever ; but tho' he cause Grief,*

Grief, he will have Compassion according to the Multitude of his Mercies ; as Ver. 24, &c. Sion said, the LORD had forsaken her, and forgotten her ; when yet she was graven upon the Palms of his Hands, and her Walls were continually before him, Isa. xlix. 14, 16. David, the Man after God's own Heart, when in sore Trials, and all things seem'd to go contrary to what had been told him, in the Name of the Lord, said, in his unbelieving Haste, All Men are Liars, Psa. cxvi. 11. He was so far from believing God's Kindness and Faithfulness towards him in his Troubles, that he said, he should perish ; and that they that spoke otherwise, told him Lies. And yet, after all this, he was made to sing gloriously of God's Mercy and Faithfulness in his well order'd Covenant ; and to die in the Faith of its being all his Salvation, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. And tho' you can't at present believe, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself, 2 Tim. ii. 13. Nor can your Unbelief make the Faithfulness of God of none Effect, Rom. iii. 3. Your Unbelief can't rob you of your Interest, tho' it does of your Comfort.

And if you not only cannot believe, thro' Weakness, but will not believe, thro' Obstinacy ; yet Christ has had such among his

his dear Children. *Thomas* said, *I will not believe*, John xx. 25. And yet the Grace of Christ conquer'd his stout Heart, and sweetly drew him again, in the Exercise of Faith, to say, *My Lord, and my God*, Ver. 28. And thus, thro' Grace, it shall be with you.

Christ cannot part with you, if you could with him. He has resolv'd that *none shall pluck you out of his Hands*, John x. 28. None of all the numerous Sins of your Nature, let them be ever so strong; no, nor all the Legions of Devils in Hell, or wicked Men on Earth, should they be all combined together against you, shall be able to move you one Hair's-breadth from that Security you have in Christ's Hands. The Father gave you to him; and the Love of his Heart engageth his Power to hold you fast. Yea, tho' in Unbelief you would throw yourself out of his Arms; yet he will never let go his Love-hold of you. For thus the Lord, the God of *Israel* faith, *He hateth putting away*, Mal. ii. 16.

And tho' the Lions roar upon you in this dark Night, yet they shall not devour you; because the *Lion of the Tribe of Judah* is stronger than they. He has them in Chains, and sets Bounds to their Rage. And he will
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ere long arise for your Help ; the *Morning Light* will ere long break out upon your Soul ; and then these fierce *Beasts of Prey* will haste to their *Dens*, Psal civ. 22. And the new Glory of the Light, breaking forth out of thick Darkness, will be amazingly glorious, and exceeding pleasant to behold. This is one Reason why the Lord suffers Darkness to seize the Spirits of his Children ; that so, when the Light of his Face shines upon them again, it may be exceeding precious in their Esteem.

And while the Darkness lasts, I would beg of you to beware of making hasty Conclusions, either of yourself, or of God's Thoughts and Ways towards you. Because you can't make a right Judgment of these Things now. And hereby you'll dis-honour God's Grace, and grieve the Spirit, by which you have been seal'd in times past, as well as pierce yourself thro' with many Sorrows.

Again, I would intreat you, *not to forsake assembling* yourself with the Saints. *There the Lord has commanded the Blessing, even Life for evermore.* Where can you go ? Christ has the *Words of eternal Life*; John vi. 68.

But

But it may be you will say, " I shall perish ; and to what End should I wait upon God ? "

But oh, that you could resolve with yourself, That if you do, it shall be at Jesus' Feet ; following him, tho' he should go from you ; and *trusting* in him, tho' he should *slay* you. This would glorify God exceedingly, as well as confound the Enemy. And remember how the Woman of Canaan sped, when she would take no Denial, *Matth.* xv. 28.

I commit you to *the God of Peace*, who shall *bruise Satan under your Feet shortly* ; and *after* you have *suffered a while*, *establish, strengthen, and settle you*, *2 Peter v. 10*. Longing for the Day-break of your Deliverance,

I rest, with sympathizing Love,
Yours in the Lord, &c.

L E T T E R XXIV.

To Mrs. E. D.

Dear Sister,

Grace and Peace be multiplied unto you, thro' the Knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

You told me, at parting, that you should be glad to hear from me, if I had any Word from the Throne concerning you. And having desired of the Lord, that he would give me one, if it was his Pleasure ; in the Night, when I was thinking of you and your Trials, that Word was brought to my Mind to write unto you, *Isa. liv. 5.* *For thy Maker is thy Husband, the LORD of Hosts is his Name :* And oh, that the Lord the Spirit, would please to lead you into that near, sweet, inseparable Relation, Christ and you stand in to each other ; while, with this Text, as with a Finger, he points the Eye of your Faith to look upon the bright Glories thereof !

Fear not, (saith the Lord, in the preceding Verse) *for thou shalt not be ashamed : neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put*

put to Shame: for thou shalt forget the Shame of thy Youth, and shalt not remember the Reproach of thy Widowhood any more. And the Reason of these Privileges promised, both here, and in the Day of Christ, is given in the following Verse ; *For thy Maker is thy Husband, the L O R D of Hosts is his Name, &c.* Oh, think upon this wonderful Declaration of Grace made in these Words !

Think a while upon the Person here spoken of ; *thy [Maker]* whose Name is the *Lord of Hosts* ! This is no less than *Immanuel*, God with us, God in our Nature, the eternal Son of the eternal Father, who did assume our Nature into personal Union with himself. He is a divine Person, that has all the essential Glory of the Godhead in him ; and therefore said to be the [LORD], JEHOVAH, which is a Name proper to God, and incommutable to any Creature : And this LORD, as Mediator, is likewiseto be considered as Man ; for his human Nature is necessarily included in these Characters which are given of his Person ; to wit, a Husband, and a Redeemer.

Well, this is the Person spoken of : But look upon him now in his divine Nature, as *thy Maker, the L O R D of Hosts* ; who has an infinite Fulness of Life and Being, in
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and of himself ; and has given Life and Being to all Creatures and Things. 'Tis HE that is adored and worshiped by the angelick Host above ; Angels and Archangels *vail their Faces* before him, as unworthy to look upon his infinite Glory, and *cover their Feet*, as unworthy to stand in his Presence ! It is HE that is adored and praised by the general *Assembly and Church of the First-born*, the Saints now in Heaven. And 'tis HE, that is greatly feared, i. e. worshiped and obey'd, in the *Assemblies of the Saints* on Earth ; while he's *bad in Reverence* of all that are round about him in the Church below ! Yea, 'tis HE that has all Creatures and Things at his Command : Before him the Devils tremble, and under his Feet the Wicked of the Earth shall be trodden down ! But Oh ! who can set forth a thousandth Part of his infinite Glory ! 'Tis far beyond the Capacity of Men or Angels, in the upper or lower Worlds, fully to take it in, or tell it out. Oh how far is the Line of created Understanding, in its greatest Perfection, from fathoming this infinite, unsearchable Depth ! What then can a Babe say ? Only this. Look upon his fair Face, who is the *Chiefest of ten thousand !* and oh, that the Lord the Spirit would give thee an amazing Prospect of the Glory of thy Beloved !

Well,

Well, this glorious Person, who is the Wonder of Saints and Angels, the Terror of wicked Men and Devils; who can make Worlds at his Pleasure, and dash his Enemies into eternal Perdition with a Word of his Mouth; this is HE, that in infinite condescending Grace, has stooped down to take thy Nature, to espouse thy Person, to become thy [Husband.] Oh amazing! *Thy Maker*, who has a far greater Right to dispose of his Creatures as he pleases, than the *Potter* has *to make one Vessel unto Honour, and another unto Dishonour*, he has set his Heart upon thee, and given himself to thee as thy Husband! Oh, astonishing! What, God love Creatures! JEHOVAH set his Heart upon the Work of his Hands! And that he should do it in such a distinguishing Way, take one, and leave another, choose one, and refuse another: How rich and sovereign is this Grace! And how sweet is this Word [Thy]! that he should give himself to thee, to be thy Husband, and betroth thee unto himself for ever, while thousands are passed by! He has indeed given himself to thee in all Relations; as Father, Brother, Friend, &c. in all which his Love shines gloriously: But oh, the sweet Relation of an Husband! What, has he given himself, his great Self, to be one with thee for ever!

Oh,

Oh, the Height, Depth, Breadth and Length of this Grace !

Again, consider, this Relation is no empty Name, no unfruitful Thing : Wondrous are the Effects of that Love which entred into this Relation, and flow thro' it. And this shineth forth in the Word [For], *For thy Maker is thy Husband, &c.* as it stands connected with the glorious Privileges promis'd in the precedent *Verse*. All thy present and future Happiness is secured in this Relation, as the Effect in its Cause. But this is a Field too large for me to enter far into. All that I can do is only to point thine Eye to it, and leave thy Faith to trace its wondrous Paths, by the Leadings of the Word and Spirit of God.

Look therefore upon the Love of thy Husband : And all the glorious Fruits of it, which flow thro' this Relation he stands in to thee. Other Husbands may enter into this Relation, and want the Love of it, or their burning-hot Love may soon grow cold. But as Christ's Heart was in a Flame of Love towards thee, when he gave himself to thee to be thy Husband ; so it abides, *yesterday, to day, and for ever* the same. He *rests in his Love*, and will never cast thee off, or seek another Object instead of thee. No, he has said concerning thee, that thou art

art his *Rest*, the Rest of his Heart for ever ; and he is the *L O R D* that changeth not ; as not in his Nature, so nor in his Love : Therefore this Relation is no empty Name. Nor yet will it appear to be an unfruitful Thing, if thou consider what the Love of thy Husband has done, and will do for thee.

For as he gave himself to thee, to be thy Husband ; so he has gloriously, transcendently, above and beyond all the Creatures, acted the Husband's Part. He has interested thee in all his Riches : *The Glory*, says he, *which thou gavest me, I have given them*, John xvii. 22. So that what Christ has is thine, as thou art one with him. Yea, the Love of this thy Husband, engaged him to become thy Saviour, thy Surety, to redeem thee from all Misery, unto all Glory ; when thy Fall in the first *Adam* was fore-view'd in all its woful Effects. Thus his Love work'd before Time. Look upon it also in its glorious Fruits in Time : 'Twas a mighty Stoop of his Love, to take thy Nature, to stand in thy Room, to obey the Law for thee, to bear thy Sins, to pay thy Debts, by giving up himself a Sacrifice in thy stead, when thou wast a Transgressor, and hadst treacherously departed from him. And as his Love went thro' Death for thee, so in Love he rose for thee, entred
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into Glory for thee, and ever sits at the right Hand of the Father, making Intercession for thee, until thou art saved *to the uttermost*. And as a Fruit of this thy Husband's Love, the Holy Spirit was sent down into thy Heart, to quicken thee when dead in Sin, to shew thee thy own Misery, and his Excellency, to enable thee to flee unto him for Refuge, whose Heart and Arms stand open wide to embrace thee, and to cause thee to fall in Love with him, who long since had set his Heart upon thee. Look also on the Fruits of thy Husband's Love, in clothing thee with his Righteousness, in supplying thee out of his Fulness, in giving thee his Flesh and Blood to eat and drink, that thou mayst live for ever; and in all that glorious Care which he exerciseth towards thee in all the Way he leads thee thro' a World of Trials. Once more, think what his Love will yet do for thee in time to come. He'll never leave thee in the Wilderness, he'll over-rule all things for thy good, he'll defend thee from all Enemies, he'll perfect thy Grace in Glory, he'll take thy Soul into his Bosom at Death, and thy whole Person at the Resurrection-Morn: And then, for ever folded up in his sweet Embraces, thou, with the rest of his redeemed Ones, shalt admire, adore, and enjoy his Love,

and

and sing the new Song ; Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father ; to him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

I am Yours in Christ, &c.

L E T T E R XXV.

To Mrs. S. C.

Dear Sister,

Grace and Peace be multiplied unto you, from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord.

When I had concluded to write unto Sister D. my Heart began to yearn towards you, and I desir'd the Lord, if he had any thing to send unto you by me, that he would give me a Word ; and presently, Matt. xxviii. 20. was brought to my Mind. *And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the End of the World.* Amen. This Promise was given to the Apostles, and in them to all Christ's Ministers, to encourage them in their Lord's Work, thro' all the successive

Ages of Time ; and it likewise contains in it, a gracious Declaration of Christ's Presence with all his Children, according to their several Stations and Employments, even unto the World's End ; and so it is matter of Encouragement to every Believer, to follow Christ in all his Appointments, and to give up themselves to him, in all manner of Obedience.

This Promise is ushered in with a Note of Attention, [Lo] and calls upon you, my dear Sister, to behold, to look upon the Grace of your Beloved, which shines forth herein. Cast your Eye therefore upon the Person promising, [I] ; *I am with you, &c.* And see his personal Perfections, and Bridegroom-Compassions, as your Head and Saviour ; view him in his Love, Grace, Mercy, Power, Faithfulness, &c. for it is no less than himself, his great Self, in all his immense Perfections, who has engaged to be with you !

Listen also unto the Voice of your Beloved, or unto what he declares unto you herein. *I am with you, &c.* [With] you ; oh amazing ! This is a Promise of his special, gracious Presence with you in the Church, and in the World ; in the House of God, and in your own House. With [You], in distinction from the World. He'll manifest

nifest himself unto you, but not unto the World: No, they *see him not*, but you shall *see him*: For having set his Heart upon you, he'll dwell with you, and display his Grace, and all his glorious Perfections, every way answerable to the Greatness of his Person, and the Nearness of that Relation you stand in to him. And tho' you mayn't always have his sensible Presence, yet even then, you have his real Presence with you. *I [Am] with you*, says he, really, for your Advantage, even when you want the Sense of it, for your Comfort. And how long will Christ be with you? why, not now and then for a Fit, and be gone, but [Alway], in all Times, Places, and Cafes whatsoever; *even unto the [End] of the World*; that is, as it respects thee in particular, unto the End of thy Being in the World; and as it respects his People in general, unto the very End of the World itself. And this our Lord confirms, with, [Amen]. This is Christ's *Amen*, or *So be it*, who with a Word could make Worlds, and with a Word can speak into Being all that vast Happiness which he has prepar'd for his People. In this Word therefore, by this *Amen*, he at once grants, and irreversibly confirms this wonderful Promise of his Presence with his People, even unto the End of the World.

Well then, my dear Sister, since Christ is, and will be with you ; what canst thou desire more ? He has all Power in his Hand to help thee, and he has all Grace in his Heart to do it ; and he is the Lord that is faithful, who will be as good as his Word. Thou hast Christ, and thou hast all ! Thou hast him in all Relations, thou hast him in all Conditions, thou hast him unto all that Salvation and Glory thy longing Soul can desire ! Live upon him therefore as thy all ! Creatures may fail thee, Relations and Friends may desert thee ; but Christ will never leave, nor forsake thee. Thou hast his *Arm* to lean on, and his *Bosom* to rest in, all the Way thou comest up from the Wilderness. Is Christ with thee ? thou canst want nothing, either for Soul or Body : Since he has infinite Fulness to supply thee, and infinite Love to nourish and cherish thee, even as his own *Flesh*. He that has all, can no more let thee want any thing which he sees good for thee, than he can deny himself : Because he loves thee as himself. Submit to his Wisdom therefore, in all the Way he leads thee thro' the Wilderness : For he'll bring thee by a right Way to the City of Habitation. And what tho' he should lead thee thro' much Tribulation ;

bulation ; since Christ is thy Companion, thou needst fear nothing. If he suffer thee to be cast into a burning fiery Furnace, himself will be with thee there, and thou shalt walk at Liberty amidst fiery Trials, and shalt not be consumed. He'll go before thee to lead thee in the Way thou shouldst go, and be with thee every Step of it to keep thee Company, and he'll be behind thee too, as thy *Rere-ward*, to defend thee. He'll be a *Wall of Fire round about thee, and the Glory in the midst of thee.* Then surely thou mayst sing in Sorrow, since Christ is with thee in all thy Distresses ; to defend thee from all Dangers, to sympathize with thee in all thy Griefs, to bear the heaviest End of thy Burdens, to support thee under 'em, to sanctify thee by 'em, to pardon all thy Weakness in bearing 'em, and compleatly to deliver thee from them, in his own Way and Time, which will be most glorious ! Thy dear Lord Jesus will be with thee even until Death ; unto Death, in Death, and thro' Death ; and then he'll *wipe all Tears from thine Eyes*, and take thee up to be with himself forever, to enjoy a blest Eternity in the Vision of his, and his Father's Face, in that Life and Glory which is yet unknown !

That the Peace of God which passeth all Understanding, may keep thy Heart and Mind thro' Christ Jesus, is the earnest Desire of

Yours in Him, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

To Mr. B. M.

Dear Brother,

Grace and Peace be multiplied.

WHEN I had a Word from the Lord for Sister C. I was loth to leave you out ; and therefore desired that he would send something unto you also. And that Word was brought, Gal. v. 1. *Stand fast therefore in the Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.*

We were by Nature, under the Law, and as Transgressors, under the Curse, under the Dominion of Sin, and the Government of Satan, and (as in ourselves considered) obnoxious to divine Vengeance, both here and hereafter : from all which, Christ hath made us free. And this Freedom is a complete and everlasting Liberty, in which

which it is both our Duty and Privilege to stand fast.

We were indeed under the Law ; but [Christ], God-Man, the Anointed of the Father, our God, our Kinsman-Redeemer, was *made under the Law, to redeem us from under it*, as a Covenant of Works, by fulfilling all its righteous Commands in our stead ; and to redeem us from its Curse likewise, *by being made a Curse for us.*

We, in all respects, were under the Dominion of Sin ; but Christ *was made Sin for us*, to redeem us from it, and for ever make an end of it.

We, by Sin, had put ourselves under the Dominion of Satan, that Prince of Darkness ; but Christ, by being *made Sin for us*, and dying a Sacrifice in our stead, has *destroyed him that had the Power of Death*, and delivered us from that dreadful Bondage in which we were held.

We, by Nature, were *Children of Wrath even as others* ; but Christ has bore all that divine Vengeance that was the due Desert of our Transgressions ; by which he has for ever delivered us from vindictive Wrath, both in this World, and that to come.

And as he has delivered us from the worst of Slavery, so he has likewise brought us into the most glorious Liberty : He has

made us *Free Indeed!* For in giving himself *a Ransom* for us, he redeemed us, not only from all Misery, but unto all Glory. He has given us a Right unto all the Privileges of the Sons of God, both here in Grace, and hereafter in Glory. Thus the Son has made us [Free]. And this Freedom is complete, and everlasting, in himself, for his whole mystical Body. And as we are now made free in him, so we shall ere long enjoy a complete and everlasting Freedom in our own Persons, by and thro' him. Mean while we should live by Faith, or [Stand] fast in that complete Freedom, that eternal Perfection we have in him.

Well then, my dear Brother, has the Holy Spirit of God been sent down into thy Heart, to quicken thee when *dead in Sin*, to shew thee the Misery of thy natural State, and to enable thee to *flee unto Christ for Refuge?* And has he at times, *bore witness with thy Spirit*, that thou art a Child of God, and enabled thee to cry unto him, *Abla, Father?* Why, thou art one of them that Christ hath made free. He hath made thee free perfectly, and eternally in himself, as I hinted before ; and he has also, in some Sense, made thee free in thy own Person too. He has delivered thee from the Law, from the Dominion of Sin and Satan, and from

from the Wrath to come ; and he has given thee, as a Believer in him, a visible Right unto all the Privileges of the Sons of God, both here, and hereafter : And he'll complete thy personal Freedom by the same Grace that begun it. Therefore *stand fast* in that [Liberty] wherewith Christ hath made thee free.

Stand fast : This Word implies Opposition. Satan, and Unbelief will oppose thy standing where free Grace hath set thee ; and that legal Spirit that remains, even in God's free Children themselves, will oppose their standing fast in this Liberty. Satan seeks to draw God's free Children into Bondage-Frames ; because he knows how much Dishonour it casts upon their Redeemer, and that glorious Liberty wherewith he has made them free ; and also because he knows how much it will entangle, and perplex their Souls, and hinder their Peace, Joy, and Usefulness. Oh ! he hates to see us stand [Fast] in this glorious Liberty ; he envies Christ the Honour, and us the Comfort of this great Salvation. Watch therefore against all the Assaults of the Enemy, from what Quarter soever they come ; and endeavour to keep thy Ground, and to stand it out bravely in Faith ; having on the Breast-plate of Righteousness,

(Christ's Righteousness) thy *Loins girt about with Truth*, (the Truth of God in the Promise, and the Truth of Christ's Salvation) thy *Feet shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace*, for an *Helmet*, the *Hope of Salvation*, and *praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit*, *watching thereunto with all Perseverance*: For this will tend to thy Redeemer's Honour, and to thy Comfort. And remember, that whatever Enemy attacks thy Faith hates thy Lord, and his Glory ; and hates thee too, thy present Joy, and future Crown. Therefore be strong, and play the Man ; and know, that if the Enemies should prevail at times, to bring thee into Bondage-Frames, yet they shall never bring thee into a Bondage-State. No, for thou art redeemed out of the House of Servants ; Thou art *no more a Servant, but a Son* ; and if a Son, then an *Heir of God thro' Christ*. Wherefore, my Beloved Brother, *So stand fast in the L O R D !*

In him I am Yours, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

To Mr. P. N.

Dear Friend,

Grace be with you, Mercy, and Peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

When I was determined to write to our dear Brother, and Sisters, you being, I trust, a longing Soul, I found a Desire to have somewhat to send unto you. And that Word was brought to my Mind, Rev. xxii. 17. *And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is a thirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely.* This Scripture will doubtless have its full Accomplishment in the *New Jerusalem State of the Church*; but yet there is a Voice in it now, a Sound of Abundance of Grace unto every poor Soul that is set a longing for Christ, and his Salvation.

These are the Words of the Lord Jesus Christ, who sent his *Angel* unto his Servant John, to testify these Things in the Churches, as Ver. 16. In this 17 Verse he continues

his Speech, and tells us who they are which proclaim the Grace of the Gospel to poor Sinners, and invite them to partake of it. And,

First, Here is the [Spirit], the Holy Ghost, who was given upon Christ's Ascension, to glorify him in the Churches, and in the Hearts of all God's Chosen. *The Spirit saith, Come.* He that searcheth the Depths of God, the Depth of his Counsels, Covenant and Promises, that knows what vast Provisions of Grace are made for poor Sinners, and what infinite Love towards 'em, and Readiness to receive 'em, there is in the Heart of God the Father, and in the Heart of Jesus Christ, He says, *Come*. This Word [*Come*], notes out that Fulness of Grace and Glory, which is provided for the Supply of poor Sinners in the Lord Jesus Christ, that Readiness there is to receive 'em, and gracious Invitation which he gives unto them. ‘*Come*, as if he should say, *For all things are now ready*; all Grace and Glory ‘your needy Souls can want, for Time or ‘Eternity. *Come*, Christ's and his Father's ‘Heart and Arms stand open wide to embrace you. *Come*, the Lord invites you ‘to come, and partake of all freely; you ‘are welcome to all his Grace; it is his ‘Will that you should come, it is his De- ‘fire

‘ fire that you should come ; therefore
 ‘ come away speedily ’. Thus *the Spirit saith, Come.* And he saith so, as a Comforter in Office, as sent from the Father and the Son to draw poor Sinners unto Jesus Christ ; which Work of his, he gloriously and efficaciously performs, when he speaks unto the Heart ; and thereby, at once, sweetly allures and constrains the Soul to come. Oh the efficacious Drawing of the Holy Ghost ! Never had any Soul seen Christ’s Beauty, been sick of Love for him, or have come unto him for Life, if the Holy Ghost had not allured it by infinite Sweetness, and drawn it by Almighty Power ! *The Spirit saith, Come* ; and thereby he draws poor Souls into conjugal Affections to the Lord Jesus Christ, a visible conjugal Relation to him, and Communion with him. And upon this, Christ hath a Bride, a visible Church on Earth. And therefore,

Secondly, The Bride saith, Come. The [Bride] ; Believers congregated in Gospel-Order, gather’d into a Church-relation, by solemn Covenant, giving up themselves unto Christ as their Head and Husband, and professing Subjection to him. And this Church, the Bride, is stiled *the City of God*,
Psal.

Psal. xlvi. 4. where the Crystal Streams of the River of Water of Life run. And she, having had such rich Experience of that Fulness of Life and Grace that dwells in, and flows thro' her Beloved, to the satiating of her longing Appetite; and also such rich Discoveries, that there is in him, not only infinitely enough for her, but also for all the Chosen of God, even unto the World's End; she, from her own Experience, and at the Command of her Lord and Husband, proclaims, by her Ministers, these glad Tidings; and invites poor Sinners unto Christ, the Fountain of Life, to drink, yea, drink abundantly. ‘Come, says the Bride, (unto poor awakened Souls) I was once as miserable as you, as poor and thirsty as you; but when the Spirit said, Come, I ventur'd in to my Lord and Husband, as God's Salvation for the Chief of Sinners; when I was almost famished with Thirst, and ready to faint away with Longings after Jesus Christ, and Fears that I should not find him; when I was just ready to perish, under the apprehended Wrath of God, the Temptations of Satan, and the Corruptions of my own Heart and Ways; and I found in him, my Saviour, a pure River of Water of Life, which is infinitely enough to satisfy and solace me thro’ Time,

Time, and to Eternity ; yea, I found in Christ, not only an infinite Fulness of Life, but also an infinite Freeness to communicate the same, notwithstanding all my Unworthiness. And as I found enough in Christ for me, so in him I see an inexhaustible Fulness for you, an infinite Store, that can never be drawn dry ! And this my Lord and Head bids me to proclaim unto you, and invite you to come. *Come therefore, you, my Companions, that hearken to my Voice, you longing Souls, that are set athirst for the Water of Life* ; venture in to Christ, and take your Fill of all his Grace : For it is a River of Life, that is full, free, and everlasting ! Thus the Bride saith, *Come.* But in the next place,

Thirdly, Christ commands him that heareth to say, *Come*. *And let him that [heareth] say, Come*. This may denote particular Believers, who have *Ears to hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches*, and likewise what the Bride says to poor Sinners in her Beloved's Name : And these, tho' not join'd to Christ's visible Church, (and so distinguished from the Bride) from their own Experience of his Grace, and from those Discernings they have had of what the Spirit and the Bride say, are commanded

manded to say, *Come*. 'Tis as if Christ
 should say, you my Children, that are afraid
 to follow me in the Ordinances of my House,
 who have not yet arrived to that Strength
 of Faith, and visible Love-Communion
 with me as my Bride hath, don't you be
 silent ; do you say, *Come* : Tell poor Sin-
 ners what you have seen and heard of
 me, and invite 'em to come ; concern
 yourselves in that glorious Work in which
 the Spirit and the Bride are employ'd,
 and in which my Heart is so deeply en-
 gaged'. And Christ, by this Command,
 not only binds them to this Duty, but like-
 wise gives them Strength for the Perform-
 ance of it ; he hereby speaks into Being
 what he calls for ; as he did, when he said,
Let there be Light, and there was Light.
 And so it carries in it a prophetic Description
 of what such Souls do, and shall say :
 But it is put in the Form of a Command,
 to excite their Obedience ; because of the
 Backwardness of such Souls to proclaim
 Christ and his Grace to others, who are
 under prevailing Fears themselves, or at
 least not so openly favoured with Com-
 munion with Jesus Christ as his Bride is.
Let him that beareth say, Come. And
 then,

Fourthly, The Lord Jesus Christ himself comes in and says, And let him that is athirst Come : And whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely. These are the Words of Christ, who once died, and now lives to save Sinners ; in which he declares his infinite All-Sufficiency to save them to the uttermost, his Readiness to receive 'em, and the kind Invitation he gives 'em to partake of all his Grace ; and to answer all the Objections which are apt to rise in the Hearts of such that are *athirst* for the *Water of Life*, he makes this royal Proclamation from his Throne : *And whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely.*

And now, my dear Friend, how is it with thee ? Hast thou seen thy Sin and Misery by Nature, that thou art utterly undone without Christ ? Hast thou had any Discernings of his Beauty, and All-Sufficiency to save, even the Chief of Sinners ? And hast thou been set a longing, a thirsting after an Interest in him, and his Salvation ? Why, thou art the Person thus invited to come. *The Spirit, the Bride, and he that heareth say, Come.* And lest, after all, thou shouldst be afraid that Christ's Heart is not towards thee, He says *Come* ; and what wouldst thou have more ? Oh !

grief ?

grieve not the Holy Spirit, by slighting his Call, do not slight the Bride's Voice in her Ministers, nor yet the Voice of him that heareth, nor shut thine Ear to the Call of Christ himself! Thou art call'd, and call'd again. Art thou *athirst* ? Thou art the Man that Christ calls to come unto him and *drink*. But it may be thou wilt say, ‘ I am athirst for Life and Salvation by Jesus Christ ; but I am afraid I am not one of them that it is designed for ; and I am so unworthy, I am afraid it will never be bestowed upon me ’. These thy Fears Christ foresaw, and provided a Cordial for thee beforehand. Listen therefore, and receive in Faith, the Life-giving Words of his Mouth, in this royal Proclamation from his Throne : *And whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely.* He says, *Whosoever [Will] : Hast thou a Will ?* Thou art the Man he speaks to, as much as if there was never another in the World in thy Case. Aye, sayst thou, ‘ I have a Will, but I have no Worthiness ; my Heart hangs back, I am afraid to venture ’. Hark then, what he says unto this. *Let him take the Water of Life freely.* [Let] him, &c. This is Christ's Grant of Life and Salvation unto thee. Oh ! Open the Mouth of Faith, and take thy Fill.

Christ

Christ bids thee *take the Water of Life freely.* [Freely] ! This will reach thy Case, if thou wast the most unworthy Creature under Heaven : For here's no Condition, nothing to be done by thee to procure or earn this *Water of Life.* No, it is set abroach *freely*, for thy thirsty Soul to take its Fill both here and hereafter. Again [Freely] ! 'Tis as if Christ should say, *Drink, yea, drink abundantly :* Thou needst not fear drinking the River of Life dry : There's such an infinite Abundance of Grace and Life in me, that thou mayst take thy Fill, however large thy Desires are ; and when thou hast it, there will be never the less in me. There's an infinite Fulness of Grace and Life in Christ, for every thirsty Soul. And this shines forth in the World [The], *Let him take the Water of Life ;* not [Of] the Water of Life ; as if one was call'd to take one Part, and another another, just as much as they needed. No, Christ calls every thirsty Soul that has a Will, a Desire to be saved by him, to take up and possess by Faith, all that infinite Fulness of endless Life and Glory that is in him. To take it all up at once, and live upon it as its own, in the Right of it, as well as to derive thence a present and successive Supply of all its Wants.

Wants thro' Time, and to Eternity. So that here is Grace enough for thee ; 'tis as full as it is free ; and in both respects it is infinite ! Come therefore, at Christ's Call, and venture thro' ten thousand Difficulties, to take the Water of Life freely. Come as thou canst, take in as much as thou canst ; attempt thy Duty ; Christ will strengthen thy Faith ere thou art aware. And if thou canst take but now and then a Sip of the Water of Life, know, for thy Comfort, that the whole River of it is thine.

One more, does *Christ* say, *Come, Let him take, &c.* These Words have in 'em, not only the sweetest Invitation, but also, an efficacious Voice of thy Saviour, as thy King ; which, in his own Time, will ripen thy Faith into that Motion he now calls for ; and command off thine Enemies, which now hinder thy coming, and taking the *Water of Life freely*.

Grace be with thy Spirit.

I am Yours in Christ, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

To Mr. E. S.

Dear Brother,

Grace and Peace be multiplied unto you, from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, by God the Comforter.

When I had concluded to write to the rest of our dear Friends, I was desirous to send a Line unto you, as a Token of my Love ; and that Word dropt on my Heart for you, *Psal. xlv. 2.* *Thou art fairer than the Children of Men.*

I know that you have seen much of Christ's Beauty, Excellency, and Glory already, to the attracting your Soul after him, to the transforming you into his Likeness, and to the filling of you with Joy unspeakable, and glorious : But there is yet more, infinitely more to be beheld in your Beloved, who is the *Chiefest of ten thousand*, and *altogether lovely !*

You

You have seen much of the Beauty of the Saints, which has drawn out your Love, and knit your Soul to 'em, as your own Company, as *the Excellent of the Earth, in whom is all your Delight.* They are indeed *Jewels* in *Christ's Esteem*, and have a sparkling Glory on them; but remember, 'tis his Sun-like Face that casts their Lustre; they shine forth in the Glory of his Rays. Theirs is but a derived Beauty from his incomparable Fairness! and is no more, if compar'd with his, than the smallest Atome to the whole Mass of Earth, a Drop to the Ocean, or a Beam to the Sun! No, nor so much neither: For *Christ* is *fairer*, infinitely fairer than these, who are the fairest of the Sons of Men. Some of the Saints shine forth more eminently in one Grace, and some in another; and a Difference will be seen among the starry Glories of the first Resurrection: But all Excellencies meet in *Christ*, as the Circumference-Lines in their Center, as the scatter'd Beams in the Body of the Sun. So that look upon the fairest of the Children of Men, in their fairest Condition, in this World or that to come, and *Christ* far exceeds them all. But oh, my weak Eye! How little can I take in of the Glory of this bright Object!

ject ! Oh, how little have I seen ! And how little can I say of his Soul-ravishing Beauty ! of his adorable Excellency ! I would only point you to him, my Brother, and say, as *John the Baptist*, *Behold the Lamb of God !*

Behold the Christ of God ! Look upon him in his transcendent Fairness ; he's *fairer than the Children of Men* : Fairer, in his Relations, as Head, Husband, Brother, Friend, &c. fairer in his Love, Mercy, Grace, Wisdom, Power, Faithfulness, &c. Fairer, in his Covenant-Engagements ; fairer, in his Conception and Birth ; fairer, in the Performances of his Life ; fairer, in the wonderful Atchievements of his Death ; fairer, in his great Resurrection ; fairer, in his glorious Ascension ; fairer, in his Exaltation now in Heaven : And as he now is, (by Covenant-Settlement) so he will ere long appear ; fairer than the Children of Men, in his Glory-Reign ; and fairer also in his last great Judgment of Men and Devils, at the End of Time : And then among the innumerable Company of glorified Saints and Angels, he'll shine forth for ever, as infinitely fairer than the Children of Men ! while himself, their eternal

eternal Sun, darts forth upon them all their bright and endless Glory ! But oh, the unsearchable Riches of Christ's Fairness ! Neither Men nor Angels can fully know, or set it forth !

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may grant unto you the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of him, who is infinitely fairer than the Children of Men ; to the changing you into the same Image from Glory to Glory ; to the preparing you for abundant Usefulness in this present Time, and a weighty Crown at Christ's Appearing, is the earnest Desire of

Yours, in our own Lord Jesus, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

To Mrs. E. G.

Dear Friend in the Lord,

Grace unto you, and Peace from God our Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord.

Having heard of your present Distress, by reason of *atheistical* Thoughts, I was

willing to write somewhat unto you. And I would advise, as the Lord shall enable you, to *three Things*. As,

1. Be not over-much cast down by reason of your present Exercise. For *the same Afflictions are accomplish'd in your Brethren which are in the World*. Think not your Case singular: For many of God's Children have been engag'd with the *Powers of Darkness*, in the same Combat that you now are; and thro' the *Captain of their Salvation*, have got a triumphant Victory over them.

2. When these vile Thoughts press in upon your Mind, endeavour to cast them out with as much Loathing, and as little Distress as you can. This was Mr. Jane-way's Advice to a Friend of his, troubled with blasphemous Thoughts, "They are," says he, the Morsels which Satan would "have you swallow down". And therefore cast them out with Loathing; but be not distressed: For they are not your Sins, any further than consented to. "They are, say he, Satan's Strivings to ravish the Spouse of Jesus; for which he shall pay dear one Day". And so far as they are a Burden, an Affliction to the Soul, so far as it crys out against them, so far they are a

Force put upon it. And the Case is the same with that of the *betrothed Damsel*, under the Law, who was not to die, if a Man met her in the Field, and forc'd her ; because she cried out, and there was none to deliver her, *Deut. xxii. 25, 26, 27.* But suppose the worst that can be, that thy Heart joins with Satan herein, and so thou becomest guilty, and filthy hereby : (And how far our wicked Hearts join Issue with Satan in his vile Suggestions, God only knows; I am apt to think, we seldom, if ever, come off without some Measure of Guilt and Defilement). Yet thou hast no Reason to be distressed with a desponding Fear, as if there was no Help for thee in God. For were thy Sins ten thousand times more and greater than they are, the Multitude of God's great Mercies infinitely exceed them. And if he resolve to be gracious to thee, and to shew Mercy on thee, down they must fall before pardoning Grace, and overflowing Mercy, as the *Egyptians* did, in the Red-Sea, and rise no more to condemn thee. Were thy Sins as Scarlet, red like *Crimson*, the Blood of *Christ* can make thee *white as Snow*. And therefore,

3. Whenever Sin and Satan assault you, labour, upon the first Onset, *to flee for Refuge*

fuge to the Hope set before you ; to haste away to Christ, that Man who is an Hiding-Place from the Wind, a Covert from the Tempest, as Rivers of Water in a dry Place, and the Shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land, Isa. xxxii. 2.

Doth the Wind of Temptation blow hard upon thee ? *Christ is an Hiding-Place from the Wind.* Not only from the Wind, the great Whirlwind of God's Wrath, which shall drive away all that are found out of *Christ*, like *Chaff*, into everlasting *Burnings* ; but he is also an Hiding-Place from the Wind of Satan's Temptations, where thou mayst be exceeding safe from all Harm, in the most evil Day that can befall thee. *The Name of the Lord*, the Lord Jesuſ the great Saviour, *is a strong Tower* for a poor Sinner ; Oh ! run into it ; and thou shalt be *safe*, Prov. xviii. 10. Do, as the *Pſalmist* said he would, *Pſal. lvii. 1.* *Under the Shadow of thy Wings will I make my Refuge, until these Calamities are overpast.* Dost thou see thy Sinfulness and Misery by Nature, doth the Enemy pursue thy Soul ? Hath he smitten thy Life down to the Ground, dost thou feel the Pain of his fiery *Darts*, and canſt thou not do any thing to ſave or deliver thyſelf *from the Wrath to come*, from that inexpressible

and eternal Misery which is the due Desert of every Transgression ? Why, *Christ* calls thee to look unto him, as once made *Sin and a Curse* for poor Sinners, by whose *Stripes we are healed*. He says, *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the Ends of the Earth*, Isa. xlvi. 22. Oh, cast up thine Eye therefore unto a once crucified Jesus ; see him, bearing Sin, and the Wrath of God, and making a full Satisfaction to divine Justice for such poor Souls that see they have not a Mite to pay ; see him, conflicting with the Powers of Darkness, and gaining a complete Victory over them, that we might be deliver'd from Satan, who had the Power of Death. Yea, cast up thine Eye to a risen Jesus ; see him, discharg'd from Sin, having for ever made an End of it ; see him, justify'd in the Name and Room of poor Sinners, who have no Righteousness of their own, to stand in before God ; see him, ascending up on high, leading *Captivity captive*, that we might be set free ; see him, enthron'd at God's right Hand, *exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance unto Israel and Remission of Sins* ; and as a compassionate High-Priest, that knows how to succour the Tempted, having once suffer'd himself, being tempted in all Points like as we are, that

that he might sympathize with us under Temptations, shield and support us in them, and deliver us from them : View him as he ever liveth to make Intercession, and as such, *able to save to the uttermost*, all them that come unto God by him. Thus look unto Christ the great Saviour, as an undone Sinner in thyself, for thy own Salvation ; cast thy Soul into his Arms, at the Feet of his Mercy, and rest upon his faithful Promise : He says, *Thou shalt be saved.* He bids thy weary, heavy laden Soul, to come unto him ; and he has promis'd to give thee Rest, Matt. xi. 28. His Arms stand wide open to embrace thee ; and he's infinitely more willing to receive thee, than thou canst be to commit thy Soul into his Hands. Then venture, with innumerable Sins, innumerable Fears, and thro' innumerable Oppositions, to cast thyself upon Christ, the mighty Saviour, and thou shalt be saved to the uttermost. Thou must believe, or die ; rest upon Christ, and run into him, or perish : Therefore stand not to hesitate whether he will save thee, or not ; but venture in unto him, and say, with Esther, *I will go in unto the King, and if I perish, I perish* ; and the royal Scepter of his Grace shall be holden out, for thee to touch, and live. Doth Satan assault

thee with the Wind of Temptation, to drive thee away from *Christ*? Oh, run the faster to him, and he'll hide thee from all Evil, and screen thee from all Danger: For never did any Soul perish, or want Succour, that fled unto *Christ* for Refuge. He will cover thy Head in the Day of Battle, and send thee suitable Grace and Strength, according to thy Day of Trial. *Christ* has all the Legions of Devils in his Power, and gathers the Wind of Temptation in his Fist, as well as he doth the natural Wind. *And in Measure when it shooteth forth, he will debate with it.* He'll not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the Temptation make a Way to escape, that you may be able to bear it, Isa. xxvii. 8. 1 Cor. x. 13. He'll not let it blow too hard upon thee while it lasts; nor will he let it blow upon thee always neither. For he is full of Compassion, and will not always chide. He knoweth our Frame; and remembreth that we are Dust, Psal. ciii. 14. He knows the Power of Temptations, the Pain of Satan's fiery Darts; having once felt them in the Days of his Flesh: And therefore from his own Experience, he'll not only sympathize with thee in them, but graciously deliver thee from them. He'll rebuke the Tempter, and cause the Wind of

of Temptation to cease, and create a *Calm* in thy tossed, troubled Soul, by a Word of his Power, when the appointed Moment of thy Deliverance is come ; as he rebuk'd the natural Wind, and it obey'd him, *Mar. iv. 39.* Therefore run to *Christ* for Shelter ; and *resist the Devil, and he'll flee from you, Jam. iv. 7.* When he sees that those very Temptations, by which he design'd to drive you away from *Christ*, are a Means of your fleeing the faster to him.

Again, do the Waves of inward Corruption, agitated by Satan, beat vehemently against thy Soul, like a mighty Tempest, which threatens to swallow thee up ? *Christ* is a *Covert from this Tempest* : Run unto him therefore, as once *made Sin*, and now exalted to save Sinners, and thou shalt be secure from all Harm. Sin shall never condemn that Soul, that flees unto *Christ* for Salvation. No, *Christ's* Death will be the Death of Sin, and the Life of that Soul, that flees unto him for Safety. - *Christ* crucify'd, is such a Covert from the Tempest, to the Soul that runs into him, that not a Drop of divine Wrath shail ever light upon it. *Christ* has so born Sin, Curse, and the Wrath of God, that he hath for ever born it away from that Soul : And God as

the God of Peace, freely, fully, and eternally forgives all its Iniquities, even all manner of Sin and Blasphemy whatever, whereby it has transgressed against him. And as Christ is a Covert from the Tempest of Sin, in its condemning Power ; so also from its tyranizing Power, unto every Soul that flees unto Him for Relief. He *will subdue our Iniquities* for us, as well as *cast all our Sins into the Depths of the Sea*, Mic. vii. 18. Christ can keep thee from fainting in the Combate, and enable thee to hold out in the Storm ; until *the set Time to favour thee*, in a peaceful Calm, come. And then, with one Word of his Mouth, he'll silence the Billows of Corruption ; as, in the Days of his Flesh, he *commanded the Sea*, and it obey'd him ; as well as *the Wind*, and it ceased. For he *ruleth the raging of the Sea* of Corruption, when *the Waves thereof arise*, he *stilleth them* ; as he doth the Raging of the Waters in the natural Sea, when it is most tempestuous ; saying, *Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further* ; and *Here shall thy proud Waves be stayed*, Psal. lxxxix. 9. Job. xxxviii. 11. How blessed then are those Souls who take Sanctuary under the Shadow of his Wings ! That harbour in him, who is a Covert from the Tempest !

Further,

Further, is thy thirsty Soul almost parch'd up with the Heat of Temptations? Is the World a dry Place to thee, that can't not afford thee one Drop of spiritual Refreshment, or Soul-Consolation? In this Case, Christ is *as Rivers of Water in a dry Place.* As *cold Waters to a thirsty Traveller*, that's ready to famish for Thirst, under the parching Beams of the Sun; so, and much more is Christ, unto the Soul that *panteth* after him. Oh, the reviving Efficacy, the transcendent Sweetness, the abundant Fulness of *Christ*, as the Fountain of Grace, unto that Soul that is *ready to perish* for Want of it; when once it is led by the Spirit, to lay the Mouth of its Faith to this *Fountain of living Water!* Here it may Drink its Fill, and bathe itself in Pleasures, with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory! Nor is he only as Waters in a dry Place, when *Christ* and the Soul first meet, for its present Refreshment; but he is also, as *Rivers of Water*, for its constant Supply. *Christ* is not like a *failing Brook*, which in the Summer's Drought deceives the thirsty Traveller; which, perhaps, was once full for his Refreshment, but now empty, and can afford him none: But *Christ* is as a River, *a broad River with Streams.* For so this Glorious *LORD* will

be unto us, Isa. xxxiii. 21. while passing thro' this Land of Drought, this Wilderness-World, unto the Heavenly Canaan. He'll be a River of Life, for Fulness, to supply our Wants, however great our Necessities be ; a River, for Freeness, however unworthy we are ; and a River, for Duration, to supply us continually ; yea, as Rivers of Water in a dry Place : There is in *Christ*, not only a full, free, and perpetual Supply of Grace ; but of all kinds of Grace : There is in him a glorious Variety, that is every way sufficient to answer all our Wants, to satisfy all our Desires, and to fill us with all kinds of heavenly Pleasures and new Delights, thro' Time, and to Eternity ! He'll be as Rivers of Water of Life unto us here in Grace, and hereafter in Glory ! Then haste away to this living Supply !

Once more, Is thy Soul weary, and almost tired out, by reason of the continual Persecution of the Enemy, which, like the Sun upon Travellers in hot Countries, beats upon thy Head, and makes thee ready to faint and die for want of a little refreshing Shade ? Why, *Christ* is also *as the Shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land*, in this weary Wilderness. Come, sit down under his Shadow, and thou shalt find great

Delight. His cooling Shade will refresh and comfort thy weary Soul. He is as the Shadow of a Rock, which none of the penetrating Beams of the Sun can pierce thro', to molest or annoy thee ; of a great Rock, that is large enough to cover thee all over. Here thou mayst sit, and take an holy Ease : For this Rock will defend thee from all Harm and Danger : Aye, and which is more, this Rock will supply thee with all heavenly Necessaries. For herein, *Christ* transcends all natural Rocks.

A weary Traveller may be glad to *embrace the Rock for a Shelter*, and sit down under its Shade for a while, to refresh him from the scorching Sun : But if he sit there long, he may starve and die for want of Sustenance : For nothing of that Nature can the flinty Rock afford him. But 'tis not so with that Soul who sits down under the Rock, *Christ*. No, wherever *Christ* is a Rock for Defence, he is also a Fountain, a Store-house for Supply. To that Soul that has the *Munition of Rocks* for its *Defence*, *Bread*, the Bread of Life, shall be given, and its *Waters*, of Consolation, shall be *sure*, Isa. xxxii. 16. Thus the Spouse, speaking of *Christ* under the Metaphor of an *Apple-Tree*, *I sat down*, says she, *under his Shade with great Delight, and his*

Fruit was sweet unto my Taste, Cant. ii.
 3. There is in *Christ*, all kinds of refreshing Shade, and all kinds of nourishing Supply. And, in a Word, there's enough for thee in him, to save thee from all Misery, unto all Glory, thro' all Times, and unto all Eternity ! But what shall I say ? There's more in *Christ* than Words can express, than the Tongue of Men and Angels can tell out, or their Hearts conceive, to an endless Eternity ! Oh, *Come and see !* Come, and taste, that the *Lord is Good !* and *blessed are all those who put their trust in him*, Psal. xxiv. 8.

And now that you may be *drawn by the Cords of Love* into the swiftest Motion after Christ, and the nearest Communion with him, to your full Joy, and complete Deliverance, is the earnest Desire of,

Your Affectionate Friend, and humble Servant in the Lord, &c.

L E T-

L E T T E R XXX.

To Mrs. E. B.

Dear and honour'd Sister,

Grace unto you, and Peace be multiplied, from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, by the blessed Comforter.

I am given to understand by Sister *J---n*, That you are exercis'd, both with Affliction of Body, and Darkness of Soul ; and I sympathize with you herein. But *think it not strange*, my dear Sister, *concerning the fiery Trials* you meet with, *as if some strange Thing had happen'd unto you*. Remember, the *LORD hath his Fire in Zion, and his Furnace in Jerusalem*. *Isa. xxxi. 9.* to refine, not to destroy his People. God sends Afflictions upon his Children for their good : Sin and Satan, indeed aim at our Destruction herein ; but God bounds their Rage, and over-rules their Malice, to issue in his own Glory, and our Salvation. The Design of Sin and Satan, is, the Destruction of our Graces, as well as of our Persons ; and therefore they blow up

up the Fire of Affliction to the utmost, and would continue it until we are consumed. But, ' Hold, says the Lord, my Children are my Gold, precious in my Esteem ; and they must pass thro' the Fire to be refined, but not lie there till they suffer Loss '. And therefore when we are in the Furnace, our God sits by, to see that the Fire be not too hot, nor continu'd too long upon us ; as *the Refiner* watcheth his Gold, manages it while in the Furnace, and takes it out thence, when it is fully purify'd, *Mal.* iii. 3.

Well then, my dear Sister, since you are one of them who are precious in the Sight of the Lord, you must pass thro' the Fire of Affliction : But since it is the LORD's Fire, which he has appointed, which he manageth, and which he'll restrain at his Pleasure, trust thyself in the Hands of thy infinitely wise and gracious Refiner, and thou shalt come out of it, both with present and eternal Advantage. This Affliction, as an Instrument in the Hand of God, the Almighty Agent, is at Work upon thee, and for thee, to exercise and increase thy Graces here, and to prepare thee for thy future Crown. Therefore endure the Trial : *For blessed is the Man that endureth Temptation :*

tation : For when he is tried, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord has promis'd to them that love him, Jam. i. 12.

But it may be, you will say, Aye, if I was sure that I was one that lov'd God, I should patiently wait for, and expect an happy Issue : But I am afraid lest I should deceive myself, deceive others, and at last come short of that Rest which remains for the People of God.

As to these thy Fears, and ten Thousand more of a like Nature, which may arise in thy Heart in a Time of Darkness, they are altogether groundless ; and tho' they may rob thee of thy Comfort, they cannot rob thee of thy Safety in Christ, nor of that Inheritance which is reserved for thee in Heaven. No, blessed be God, you are still just where Free-Grace set you : God has fixt you in his Son, and laid you, by Faith, upon Him *the Rock of Ages* ; and now, your Salvation stands as immoveable as the Rock on which it is founded. The Rain may descend, the Floods come, and the Winds blow, all kind of Afflictions and Temptations together, may beat vehemently against your Faith of Safety in Christ, but your Security in him shall never fall ; because

because founded upon a Rock, that is able to bear the greatest Weights which are laid upon it, and to secure the Building from all Danger, in the greatest Stress of Weather which can possibly befall it. The Rock of Immutability is still beneath you ; and unless Christ could sink, your Soul, the Salvation of it, I mean, that leans upon him, can never fall. You may fall as to your Frames, but can never sustain one Shake as to your State. No ; *The Foundation God has laid in Sion, is a Stone, a try'd Stone, a precious Corner-stone, a sure Foundation ; and he that believeth on him, shall not be confounded,* Isa. xxviii. 16. 1 Peter ii. 6. And now, let all the Objections be brought out, that all the Legions of Devils, and Armies of Corruptions combin'd, can raise against the Salvation of that Sinner that looks unto Christ for Life, and down they must fall before the Grace of this Promise : God's Word shall stand, to the eternal Salvation of that Soul, and the Confusion of all its Enemies.

The Lord well knew, what mighty Assaults would be made upon the Faith and Comfort of his Children, and therefore added his Oath to his Great Word ; That by two immutable Things, in which it was impos-

impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong Consolation, who have fled for Refuge to lay hold upon the Hope that is set before us, Heb. vi. 18. And have not you, my dear Sister, in Times past, fled unto Christ for Refuge ? Yea, don't you even now ? Dare you flee unto any other than the Name of the L ORD, the great Saviour, as your strong Tower, for Safety ? And if you dare not, why should you question your Safety ; since God's Word assures you of it ? God says, The Soul that runneth into the Name of the L ORD, is *SAFE*, Prov. xviii. 10. Satan and Unbelief say, Nay ; and produce ten thousand Evidences against such a Soul, in its own Heart and Life. And thus there is a Strife : Well, God adds his Oath ; he comes in on the Side of his Child, whose Life seems to hang in Suspense ; and because he can swear by no greater, he *swears* by HIMS ESF : That is, he engages all the Perfections of his Great BEING, for the Salvation of that poor Sinner, who flees to Jesus, the sent Saviour : and accordingly, as the infinitely Wise, True, and Faithful God, gives Testimony of the same ; which, with Reverence be it spoken, is the highest ASSURANCE the GODHEAD is capable of giving ! And if the

the Witness of faithful Men is to be receiv'd, *the Witness of God is greater,* 1 John v. 9. And if *an Oath among Men is to them an End of all Strife*; what a Confirmation must the *Oath of JEHOVAH* be!

Well then, my dear Sister, since the faithful God stands for thy Salvation, on the one Side, and the Powers of Darkness stand against it, on the other: I would fay unto thee, as the Apostles, in another Case, *Whether it be right in the Sight of God, to hearken unto you* (for thee to hearken unto Sin and Satan) *more than unto God, judge ye.* Attempt thy Duty then, oh thou fearful-hearted one, by a fresh Act of Faith, as one of God's Witnesses, to *set to thy Seal that He is TRUE:* To stand thy Ground, *in the Liberty wherewith Christ has made thee free;* even in the very Face of the Enemy: (and well thou mayst, since the LORD stands with thee) and thy Soul shall *tread down Strength,* and *put to Flight the Armies of the Aliens,* Armies of unbelieving Thoughts, muster'd up by Satan the Prince of Darkness. And if thou canst not say, with *Thomas, My Lord, and my God;* yet indulge not that Monster Unbelief, that dares, in the Face of so much Assurance,

Assurance, to give the faithful God the Lie ! But wherever the Enemy bears hard upon thee, that thou shalt perish ; endeavour to flee to Christ, as a helpless, perishing Sinner, in thyself, and commit thy Soul afresh into his Hands, to be kept till *the Day of Redemption*. And in so doing, thou wilt honour God, thy Soul will find Rest, and Satan will be forc'd to flee. For when he sees that those *fiery Darts* he shoots at thee, to drive thee off from Christ, are a Means to hasten thy Flight to him, he'll retire. Therefore learn the Art of War, and stand to thy Arms, as a valiant Soldier of Jesus Christ ; opposing the Enemy with *the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*; holding up Christ by Faith, on every Side, to resist the *fiery Darts* he shoots at thee, from what Quarter soever they come. And if at any time he gives thee a Foil, then run to thy *Rock*, and hide thee, into the *Name of the LORD*, thy *strong Tower*, where thou shalt be *safe*, and set aloft out of the Reach of thy Enemies.

But it may be, thou wilt say, ‘ Alas, I am so confused and dark, so weak and wounded, that I can neither stand my Ground for Christ, nor run to him ’.

If this be thy Case, then know for thy Comfort, that the *Captain of thy Salvation* stands for thee, and will come to thee, when thou canst not come to him. Thy compassionate High Priest has Bowels for thee, every way proportionable to the Measure of thy Distress. He's a Man of Bowels, Yea, the God of Bowels : The Compassions of our Gospel High Priest are infinite ! And having himself *suffer'd, being tempted in all Points like unto us,* he is able also, from an inward, experimental Feeling of the Power of Temptations, to *succour us when tempted.* And as he has an Ability of Bowels to pity us, and an Ability of Strength to help us ; so he has also Authority from his Father, the broad Seal of Heaven, to be our Physician to heal us ; and he's *faithful to him that appointed him.* So that our Jesus is just such a Saviour as we need. *The Spirit of the Lord GOD, says he, is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good Tidings to the Meek; he hath sent me to bind up the Broken-hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the Opening of the Prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable Year of our LORD, and the Day of Vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn: To appoint unto*

unto them that mourn in Zion, to give them Beauty for Ashes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning, the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness, that they might be called Trees of Righteousness, the Planting of the LORD, that he might be glorify'd, Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3. This was the Work the God of all Grace sent him about ; and oh, with what amazing Tenderness doth he perform it ! *He healeth the Broken in Heart, and bindeth up their Wounds,* Psal. cxlvii. 3. He says to the Prisoners, Go forth ; to them that are in Darkness, Shew yourselves ; and then again they feed in the Ways, and their Pastures are in all high Places. They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the Heat nor Sun smite them : For he that bath Mercy on them shall lead them ; even by the Springs of Water shall be guide them, Isa. xlix. 9, 10. And thus the Lord Jesus will deal with you, my dear Sister ; therefore be strong, fear not : Behold your God shall come with Vengeance, (to destroy all thy Enemies, who shall be found Liars unto thee) even God with a Recompense, (for all thy waiting for him) he shall come and save you, Isa. xxxv. 3.

Into his Arms I commit you ; earnestly desiring that happy Morning of divine

Favour, which shall arise upon your Soul, when the short *Night* of your present Weeping is over : Christ will *see you again, and your Heart shall rejoice, and your Joy shall no Man take from you.* And, mean while, tho' Clouds and Darkness cover thee, Commotions and Tempests shake thy Mind ; yet all is clear, as to thy State, in the upper Region of Christ's Love !

In Him, with dear Love,

I rest Yours, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

To Mr. W. and E. C.

Dear Brother and Sister,

I Beg leave to return you hearty Thanks for all your Favours. I am very sorry to hear of your Troubles ; and should rejoice to hear of the Kindness of the Lord, in granting you a sanctify'd Use of 'em, and an happy Deliverance from them. Let us not think it

it strange, that *in the World we have Tribulation*; but rather rejoice, that in Christ we have *Peace*, amidst all the shaking Storms and surging Waves that pass over us. Vanity and Vexation are wrote upon all the Creatures: No Satisfaction or Rest for our Souls, but in the Bosom of God. *Riches make themselves Wings, and flee away*; but they that have Christ for their Portion *inherit a Substance*, that can never be lost or lessen'd. God in Christ is Substance; all Things else are Shadows. If we seek Happiness in Creatures; they'll all say, eventually, 'Tis not in me. But so far as God hath our Hearts, so far we are at rest. Because the infinite Fulness of his perfect and immense Being is a satisfying Good, to the most enlarged Desires of the Heaven-born Soul. All Things below God are subject to change, are passing from us, and we from them; but *Jehovah*, our Portion, changeth not; nothing can separate him from us, nor us from him. Oh, blessed is the Man whose God is J E H O V A H ! When the Lord empties us of Creatures, the Language of his Grace and Providence is, *Come, my People, enter into your Chambers, and hide yourselves*: Come into my Bosom, take up your Delights in me; I will be all unto you, when every thing else is gone: *Hide yourselves*

selves under the Shadow of my Wings, until these Calamities are *overpast*. And oh, happy Soul, that is fill'd with God, when empty'd of the Creature ! Oh blessed Exchange ! Yea, may we not say, oh happy Trial, oh blessed Affliction, that has drawn me off from the Circumference-Lines of Creatures-perfections, to rest in GOD, the Center of all my Blessedness !

The God of Peace sanctify wholly and meeten you daily for the *Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, which is *incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away* ! Begging your Prayers, I rest,

Yours in Christ for ever, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

To Mr. H.

Dear Sir, my honoured and beloved Brother in Christ,

IT was with Concern that I heard Mr. O-- read a Letter of yours, wherein you gave some Account of your inward and outward Trials : And therefore I was desirous to write a Line, in hopes it might be convey'd to you. And, be of good Comfort, my

my Brother, you have one Friend, that you may have Communion with at all times, and it is not in the Power of any Creature to intercept it. Jesus Christ can send from Heaven unto you by his Holy Spirit, and give you to know his Mind ; and you, by the Assistance of the same Spirit, may fully open your Heart unto him : And no Creature can hinder it. Oh, prize your Friend in Heaven, and labour after a more intimate Communion, and greater Familiarity with him, now your Converse with Friends on Earth is in a great measure cut off. This, indeed, is hard Treatment from the Creature : But remember, 'tis a kind of Persecution that you suffer for Jesus' Sake ; and, like your Lord, learn Obedience by the Things you suffer, and endure the Cross for the Joy set before you. For this shall turn to your Salvation, and Glory in the Day of Christ. It may be, the Lord may have design'd, (for look unto him in it, thro' and above the Creature) by cutting off the Streams, to bring you to drink more immediately at the Fountain-Head. And that is infinitely better. Certain it is, that the Voice of your Beloved's Grace, in this Providence is, *O, my Dove, that art in the Clefts of the Rock, in the secret Places of the Stairs, let me hear thy Voice, let me see thy*

thy Countenance ; for sweet is thy Voice, and thy Countenance is comely. Your dear Lord Jesus hath desired a more free and intimate Communion with you. Indeed, he loves you : He loves you dearly, he loves you strongly, he loves you unchangeably, and ~~will~~^{ever} love you eternally. Oh, Come and see ! Come, and prove his Grace ! Come, and see how good the L O R D is ! How much better he will be to you than ten Sons, than all the Creatures ! Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at Peace : Thereby Good shall come unto thee. Perhaps, by this Providence, well improv'd, you may have a greater Experience of the Sweetnes, Fitness, Fulness, Excellency and Glory of Christ's Friendship than ever. And from hence, with the greatest Solace and Admiration, commend him unto others, with a *This is my Beloved ! and This is my Friend !*

And have you sinn'd against your Friend ? Have you griev'd your Friend ? Oh, grieve with him ! but do not think that he will forsake you : For thus the L O R D the God of *Israel* saith, *be hateth Putting away.* If the L O R D your Friend, had not had Love enough in his Heart to pardon all your innumerable Transgressions, and to pass by all your great Provocations, he would never have begun to love you ; he wquld not have

have set his Heart upon you in Christ, in the Beginning of his Way, before his Works of old ; nor yet would he have begun to manifest his Love, by calling you out of Darknes, into his marvellous Light. For God's Love begun, must run on to all the happy Objects thereof in one eternal Roand, unto Ages without End. And that it might do so, infinite Wisdom divided a Water-course, thro' a crucify'd Jesus, for Love's overflowing Waters, that so reigning Grace might superabound over all our abounding Sinfulness, to the Honour of all the divine Perfections. Your God, my Brother, fore-view'd all your Iniquities, in all their Aggravations, and yet, in the Greatness of his Love, he resolved to be gracious unto you, and to have Mercy upon you, in the free, and full Forgivenes of them all. He knew that your Neck was an Iron-Sinew, and your Brow, Brafs ; and that you would deal very treacherously ; and yet he resolved, that nothing, none of all your Unkindnes and Ingratitude should ever separate you from his Love. Oh, Behold this Love, and adore it ! Behold it, and let your Heart melt into Gospel-Repentance before it ! Behold it, until you feel an attracting Efficacy in it, and are changed into its Likeness ! What, will not the Lord cast you off for

all that you have done! Will he not deal with you after your Sins, nor reward you according to your Iniquities! Altho' they are more highly aggravated, and in some Sense greater, as you are one of his Favourites, for whom he has done such great Things, than theirs can be, who are the People of his Wrath, against whom he hath Indignation for ever ! Will he not turn you into Hell, with the Nations that forget God ! Oh, Let this set your Heart against Sin ! Let this Love engage you to give a Bill of Devorce to it ! and to say, with *Ephraim*, *What have I to any more with Idols ?* Oh, my Brother, The Lord expects you should return unto him again. Shall he turn away, says he, and not return ? And, go, says, he, proclaim these Words towards the North, (to my Children, who by Sin have lost the sweet Beams of my sensible Favour, that like the South-Wind, had us'd to blow upon their Souls with its refreshing Gales ; and are got into the cold Point, having lost their first Love, and their Hearts almost frozen against me, and are apt to think that my Love towards them, is as cold as theirs towards me) and say unto them, *Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD, and I will not cause mine Anger to fall upon you : for I am merciful, saith the LORD,*

*LORD, and I will not keep Anger for ever.
Only acknowledge thine Iniquity, that thou
hast transgressed against the LORD thy God,
and hast scatter'd thy Ways to the Strangers
under every green Tree, and ye have not
obeyed my Voice, saith the LORD.* Turn,
O Backsliding Children, saith the LORD,
for I am married unto you, &c. You see,
my dear Brother, how the LORD calls
upon you to return. Turn not therefore
away from him ; for the LORD will not
forsake his People for his great Name's sake,
because it hath pleased the LORD to make
them his People. I am glad that you have
been helpt to plead his Promise with him ;
that he will never leave you, nor forsake
you : It is a Token of his never-failing
Kindness, and of the fresh Visits thereof
towards you. Go on to put the Promise
in Suit : For the God of all Grace, will not,
cannot deny himself. Consider likewise,
what Encouragement you have to approach
the Throne of Grace, to find Mercy, and
Grace to help in Time of Need ; since you
have a Jesus, that is entred into Heaven
for you with his own Blood, and there
lives for you, as your Advocate and Inter-
cessor, to save you to the uttermost. And
cast not away your Confidence, wh ich hath
great Recompence of Reward. It is, as

Dr. Goodwin observes, one great End of Satan, in tempting us to Sin, to weaken our Faith. Let us therefore beware of this Device. And when we have fallen, let us not yield to unbelieving Fears about our Interest in God, or our being in a State of Grace; but rather, in the Faith of our Relation to him, let us return, and say with the Prodigal, *Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy Sight, and am no more worthy to be call'd thy Son.* For if we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness.

With a Word or two of Caution and Exhortation, I'll conclude. And beware, my dear Brother, of yielding to any Sin. For hereby you will greatly dishonour God, grieve the Comforter, weaken your own Graces, strengthen your Corruptions, and unfit yourself for the Lord's Service. And in order to avoid sinful Acts, watch against sinful Thoughts, keep your Heart with all Diligence. Oh, let it not steal out from God, the Sum of all Perfection and Bliss, to seek Delight in the Creature, or any base Lust. Abide in Christ by Faith, and he will abide in you by his Spirit: and so you shall mortify the Deeds of the Body. Live in a constant Dependence on Christ,

and

and Independence on yourself. For Inherent Grace, as you well observe, is not able to keep us in a Time of Temptation, without fresh Influence from above. Be diligent in the Use of Means : Read God's Word, and meditate therein Day and Night. Be frequent in secret Prayer : and neglect not publick Ordinances. Let the Saints be your own Company : Delight in them who are the Excellent of the Earth. Flee youthful Lusts. Your Age, and the Place you live in, calls for great Watchfulness. Your Temptations are strong : Oh, be you strong, to resist them, in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus ! Remember, he has Crowns and Thrones for every Overcomer. If you seek the Lord early, and follow him fully in your present youthful Day, as it will be greatly to his Honour, so to your own exceeding Joy, and unspeakable Glory. You are call'd to wrestle with the Powers of Darkness, both within and without : and had therefore need to have on the whole Armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil Day, and having done all, to stand. You are call'd to run your Christian Race, for an incorruptible Crown : Keep it in sight, to animate you in your Course : That you may

so run, as to obtain the invaluable Prize of eternal Glory !

Grace be with you, *Amen.*

I am, Sir, yours in the Lord, &c.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

To J. M.

Dear Sister,

Grace and Peace be multiplied unto you thro' the Knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

Having heard that you are yet on this side Glory, travelling thro' the Wilderness, it is on my Heart to have a little Talk with you by the Way. But by reason of Distance, Paper-converse is all that can be attain'd. 'Tis the Pleasure of our dear Father, to exercise thee in a very particular Manner, and to continue it long upon thee : But be not cast down hereat, as if some strange Thing had happened : For as many as the Lord loves, he rebukes and chastens. But it may be you'll say,

" My

" My Affliction is very uncommon, has
 " lasted a great while, and it is like to en-
 " dure so long as I'm in this World ".

Well, be it so : Yet remember that God's special Love to you ordain'd this particular Trial ; and his everlasting Kindness keeps it still upon you. This was the Means infinite Wisdom pitch'd on, for the Display of boundless Love to you. By this, you are to be made conformable to Christ in Sufferings, and meetned for a Conformity to him in Glory. Since Free-Grace has saved you, give it leave to carry on your Salvation in its own Way. What tho' you pass thro' much Tribulation, the Kingdom's at the End. I doubt not, but the Lord, at times, has opened much of his Love to your Soul in the present Afflictions: But the brightest Discoveries are behind. The great Opening of God's Heart, in the Gift of every Trial, is reserved for us till we get over *Jordan*, on the other side Death, into the Land of Promise. Then we shall remember all the Way the Lord led us thro' the Wilderness, and see it was a right Way to a City of Habitation. Then the Mysteries of Divine Providence shall be unfolded, the Cloud taken from off every dark Dispensation, and the Vail from our Understandings. There, the secret Springs

of boundless Love, Infinite Wisdom, and Almighty Power, which ordain'd, managed, and over-ruled every Scene of Providence, for the Glory of God, and our Advantage, shall at once be laid open : For we shall see as we are seen. We shall bless God, when we come to Heaven, for every, even the bitterest, sharpest, longest Affliction, that attended our mortal Life ; because we shall see how the Lord uninterruptedly carried on the Designs of his own Glory and our Salvation, by every Change that pass'd over us. Mean while, we must live by Faith, and labour after an encreasing Submission to the Divine Will, under the severest Rebukes, and a Blessing of God for every Stroke, till Grace is swallowed up in Glory : When our Wills, with the highest Complacence, shall everlastingly flow into the Will of God. And even now, we have reason, not only to be patient, but also to rejoice, and glory in Tribulation. And was the Eye of our Faith strong enough to pierce the Cloud of afflictive Providences, and discern the Love of our Father's Heart, which, as an infinite Deep, coucheth beneath, and is the Spring of every Dispensation, we should sing in Sorrow, take Pleasure in Distresses, and glorify God in the Fires. *Our light Affliction,* saith the Apostle,
which

*which is but for a Moment, worketh for us
a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of
Glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17.* There are three
Things comprised in these Words, which
I desire you may be enabled, frequently, to
meditate upon. *First,* The Lightness of
the Saints Affliction. *Secondly,* The Short-
ness of it. And *Thirdly,* The Advantage
of all their present Trials.

First, The Lightness of the Saints
Affliction: Our Light Affliction. It's not
said, the Afflictions of the World are
light: But our Affliction is light. And
it is so, if compared with what we have
deserv'd, and the Damned in Hell endure.
Light, if compared with what Christ once
bore, when for us he was, the Man of
Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief. Light,
because by virtue of Christ's Suffering for
us in our room and stead, the Curse is taken
out of all our Afflictions. Again, they're
light, because omnipotent Strength is en-
gaged to support us under 'em: Underneath
are the everlasting Arms. We have not,
are not, shall not be left to go thro' any
Trial alone. The God of *Jacob* is our
Refuge and Strength, a very present Help
in Trouble. The Lord Jesus is our sweet
Companion in Tribulation. He is with us,
to sympathize with us in our Sorrows, to

sustain us under our Burdens, to pardon all our Unbelief and Impatience, when in the Furnace ; and at last compleatly and gloriously to deliver us, and bring us forth as Gold seven times refined. No Affliction, indeed, for the present is joyous, but grievous to our frail Flesh. It is so in itself, but much more so to us ; because we live so much by Sense, and so little by Faith. Every Trial that passeth over us, hath a light as well as a dark Side : And we should look upon every Affliction with a double View : As 'tis oppressing and grieving to weak Nature, it is, in itself, Evil ; and calls for Submission to the Divine Will. But then, as the same Affliction is view'd, as flowing from God's Love, and effectually managed for his Glory, and our Advantage ; so 'tis good : and ought to be matter of our Joy and Thanksgiving.

Let's leave it then to them that have no Interest in the God of all Grace, to think Afflictions heavy : For wo to them that are alone. But as for us, that are interested in God, (in all his Persons, and in all his Perfections, as engaged in Covenant for our good) let's go on rejoicing in Tribulation ; esteeming all our Afflictions, as indeed they are, light.

Secondly,

Secondly, The Shortness of the Saints Affliction, is matter of great Consolation : 'tis but for a Moment. A Moment is but a short Space, the smallest Division of Time. And unto this of a Moment, are our longest Afflictions compared. Suppose they should last as long as we are in this World : Yet, even our whole Life, if compared with a vast Eternity, is but like a Moment. And, as Mr. *Dod* well says, " What can be great to him that counts the World nothing ? Or long, to him that counts his Life but a Span " ? Oh ! were we more frequent in our Converse with Eternity, it would make the Afflictions of this present Time appear short. Did we live more in the Views of approaching Glory, we should remember our Afflictions as Waters that, pass away ; that are here one Moment, and gone the next. But alas ! such is our Folly, that we are taking Thought for a great while to come : And so make our apprehended, future Trials, present Distresses. Whereas, were we under the most pressing Weights, and did take Thought for no more than the Day ; (and *sufficient to it, is the Evil thereof*) living by Faith on the Borders of Glory, as just entering into the Mansions of Rest ; it would alleviate our Sorrows, and make the longest Trial

Trial appear short. Could we thus reason with ourselves every Day, ‘ Well, I’m got one Day nearer home ; the Afflictions of the past Day I shall never go thro’ any more : And perhaps, before I see another Day in this World, I may see Glory’s Day ; a Morning that will have no Clouds nor Evening to succeed it : No Sorrow, Sin, nor Death to darken its lustre’. Oh, what a Means would this be to increase our Patience, and make us of an enduring Spirit ! And what matter of Comfort is it, that while our short-lived Afflictions last, Christ will be with us in ’em ? He’s with us when we pass thro’ the Waters, that the Rivers don’t overflow us ; that the swelling Waves of Affliction don’t overwhelm us : And when we walk thro’ the Fires, that the Flames kindle not upon us, that fiery Trials don’t consume us. The Priests Feet were to stand in *Jordan*, till all *Israel* was clean passed over. So our dear Lord Jesus will stand amidst our Distresses, dividing the Waters before us, till all his Children are clean passed thro’ ’em. His Presence with us in Affliction, will make it light ; and his delivering Kindness out of it, will make it short. But,

Thirdly, The Advantage of the Saints Affliction, is also an Encouragement to Faith

Faith and Patience : It worketh for us. But what doth it work ? Why, no less than Glory ! And it works Glory for us, as it prepares us for it. Glory was prepared for us, and settled upon us, in God's everlasting Covenant with his Son, before the World was. And Affliction is a Means, infinite Wisdom, Power, and Grace makes use of, to prepare us for Glory : That Glory which was got ready for us before Time, and will last to an eternal Space beyond it. And who would think much to endure Affliction, that sees it is but for the Trial, and perfecting of his Graces ; and that the Exercise of each might be found unto Praise, Honour, and Glory at Christ's Appearing ?

Now then, let's bring Things to the Ballance of the Sanctuary, and learn to judge of 'em aright. Let's amass together all the Afflictions of a Believer's Life, and put 'em in one Scale, and Glory in the other ; and see if that don't infinitely outweigh them ! especially, if we cast in the additional Weights that are on Glory's Side : Here's Affliction on the one Side ; but Glory on the other : Light Affliction, for a Moment ; but a Weight of Glory ; yea, an exceeding, a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory ! Well might the Apostle say, *For I reckon,*

reckon, that the Sufferings of this present Time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in us, Rom. viii. 17.

Dear Sister, you are straitned in me, a poor, contracted, narrow-mouth'd Vessel, that can take in, or let out but little : But you're not straitned in Christ. The Lord enlarge your Capacity, to take in Abundance of himself in the glorious Promises ! And open unto you such Views of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light ; which may cause you to go comfortably thro' your present Trials : And at last give you a triumphant Passage thro' the Valley of the the Shadow of Death, under the bright Shines of his Face, beheld by Faith ; until Faith is swallowed up in Vision !

So prays, yours in the Lord, &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

To E. H.

My dear Sister in Christ,

I Greet you : wishing Grace and Peace may be multiply'd unto you, thro' the Knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

Yours

Yours I receiv'd, and rejoice to hear
 how our gracious God is carrying on his
 Work in your Soul. It is our unspeakable
 Privilege, that our Lord's Fulness cannot
 decay. 'Tis hence we have receiv'd all our
 Supplies hitherto. And tho' we are still as
 needy Creatures as ever, yet the Fulness
 of Christ abides unchangeably the same.
 As it is an overflowing, so an ever-flowing
 Fountain ; which fills the Saints in both
 Worlds. 'Tis hence the Saints have, do,
 and shall receive thro' all the Ages of Time:
 and this will fill us to an endless Eternity,
 without the least Waste. Let all the Saints
 in Heaven and Earth drink, yea, drink
 abundantly, drink their Fill out of the Ful-
 ness of Christ ; yet can they not sink this
 Fountain one Hair's Breadth. Because our
 Maker is our Husband : The L O R D of
 Hosts is his Name. The Grace of Christ,
 as the Church's Beloved, is not the Grace
 of a mere Creature : then it would be soon
 dry'd up and gone : But it is the boundless,
 infinite, inexhaustible Grace of J E H O V A H,
 the Rock of Ages, who changeth not ! Oh
 the transcendent Fairness of our Beloved, as
 he is our G O D, as well as our Goel, or
 Kinsman-Redeemer ! What sweet Fellow-
 ship may we have with the infinite Grace
 of the boundless Deity dwelling in our own
 Nature !

Nature ! Here, divine Terror shall not make us afraid ; because infinite Majesty is cloth'd with our Flesh. We may well hold fast our Confidence, since we have such a great High-Priest, Jesus the Son of God, passed into the Heavens for us. Jesus, born of the Virgin, to be a Saviour ; and yet the Son of God in our Nature ! The Bowels of Christ, our Gospel High-Priest, are truly human, and yet infinite : Because of the Union of the Divine and Human Nature in the wonderful Person of our Beloved. What Encouragement is this to our Faith ? We may come daily with our empty Souls to our full Jesus. Our Wants are innumerable ; but there's enough in Christ to fill us : Yea, there's a Redundancy, more than enough. The Vessels of Mercy are and shall be cast into this Ocean of Glory, contained in it, and fill'd with it ; but they can never contain that, which contains them ; because the most enlarged Capacities, even of glorify'd Saints, are still but finite : and the Glory of God, into which they are cast, is infinite ; an immense Sea, without either Shore, or Bottom !

The Lord help you, my dear Sister, to abide in Christ by Faith, and to come to him daily with all your Wants : His Power,
Grace,

Grace, and Faithfulness are all engag'd to grant you a rich Supply. To live by Faith on the Son of God, is the every Day's Work of a Believer. And when you can't come to Christ, in the Views of your Marriage-relation to his Person, and Interest in his Fulness, you may come as a poor perishing Sinner in yourself, unto him the exalted Saviour, who is mighty to save, whose Office it is to save the chief of Sinners ; even all them that come unto God by him. And such is his Grace, that in no wise he will cast out any poor Soul that comes to him. No, tho' it be ever so unworthy, vile, wretched and miserable ; there's Strength enough in his Arm, and Grace enough in his Heart, to save to the uttermost. It matters not how great our Wants be, when we come an infinite Fountain. It is no more for Christ, to fill the vastest Desires of the most needy Creature that ever came to him, than for the Sea to fill a Cockle-shell. Nay, 'tis not so much : For tho' there is a sort if Immensity in that vast Confluence of Waters ; yet they may be lessened. But the Fulness of Christ is properly infinite, and therefore not subject to the least Diminution.

But I must conclude, desiring that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father
of

of Glory, may grant unto you a more abundant Measure of the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of Him, whom to know, is Life eternal. With dear Love to yourself and all Friends,

I rest Yours in Christ for ever, &c.

L E T T E R XXXV.

To P. W.

My dear Sister,

I Rejoice to hear of your Health, and wish your Soul may prosper exceedingly. Dear Child, work while it is Day. Improve all the Time the Lord gives you for his Glory : For this will be for his Honour, and your own Joy, both now and in the Day of Christ. Oh, be diligent, that you may be found of him in Peace, without Spot, and blameless ! Christ will never leave thee, nor forsake thee : His Grace will be sufficient for thee : Therefore lay out thyself for him, all manner of Ways, at all Times, and in all Places. Keep the Crown in View, to quicken and encourage you to run with Patience the Race that is set

set before you. Who would not work for Christ, that glorious Lover ! That glorious Master ! Who HIMSELF will be our exceeding great REWARD ! But ah, Wretched me ! how ungrateful, disingenuous, rebellious, and slothful have I been ! 'Tis well for me that Free-Grace reigns, reigns thro' Righteousness, a better Righteousness than mine, unto eternal Life; and that where Sin *has abounded*, Grace doth much more abound. Was it not so, I should never be saved. But, blessed be God, I see, to my unspeakable Joy, the whole of my Salvation, founded in, and secur'd by free, reigning Grace ! But then, what a Debt of Love, in all holy Obedience, doth a saved Soul owe unto its Saviour ! Oh here, I fall short, vastly short of what is my Duty ; and so of that Glory I ought to give him . Oh Wretch that I am, doth Christ delight to glorify me : and shall I dare, by my Negligence in his Service, to slight his Honour ! And yet thus evilly have I done innumerable Times. Oh, “ I must go into “ Heaven, (as Mr. Rutherford says) Free-“ Grace's Divour ”. And, “ Surely I “ shall die, minting and aiming to be a “ Christian ”. But then, oh, then, I shall be a Christian indeed ! As full of Christ, as like him, and as able to serve him, as now my Soul longs to be ! Oh, pray for me, that

that while I abide on this side *Jordan*, I may be blest with a growing Communion with Christ, an increasing Conformity to him, and a more abundant Service of him ! And the Lord grant you these three Blessings !

I rest Yours, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

To T. W.

Dear Brother,

I Bless God for Christ : And because he lives, I live also. Oh, my Brother, what Grace is it to us, that our Union to Christ, our Life, cannot be broken ! And, oh that our Faith of Interest in him, in his Person and Fulness, may daily engage us to live to him, who died for us, and rose again ! Oh that we might not be contented to live at the poor, low, carnal Rate at which the most of Professors and Church-Members live at this Day ! Our Lord *has his Fan in his Hand ; and he will throughly purge his Floor.* Oh, when the Lord shall search *Jerusalem* with Candles, who may abide the Day of his Coming ?

Let

Let us therefore watch, and keep our Garments. And whatever others do, let us labour to improve all our present Moments, some way or other to glorify God, that so when our Lord appears, we may be found of him in Peace: And have his *well done*, as *good and faithful Servants*. Oh, how blessed a Thing it is, to say with the Apostle, *for me to live is Christ!* 'Tis sweet to live for Christ here, as well as to live with him hereafter. Oh what a glorious Master is Jesus Christ! How glorious is his Service! And what a glorious Reward will he bestow upon his Servants, when he bids them *enter into the Joy of their Lord!*

Wishing a rich Increase of all Grace, unto all Glory ; and desiring your Prayers for us,

I rest, Yours, &c.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Page 20. Line 11. after *if*, read *an.* p. 36. l. 15.
for *Christ*, read *Christ's.* p. 38. l. 2. for *it*,
read *its.* l. 18. after *in*, read *these.* p. 40. l. 4.
after *past*, read *Tense.* p. 45. l. 28. for *is*, read *at.*
p. 74. l. 18. for *shall*, read *shalt.* p. 96. l. 11. for
fear, read *fare.* p. 103. l. 29. blot out *a'll.* p. 123.
l. 28. after *but*, read *the.* p. 124. l. 20. for *in*,
read *on.* p. 141. l. 10. read *of.* p. 165. l. 28.
for *the*, read *this.* p. 174. l. 16. for *us*, read *you.*
p. 175. l. 5. for *God*, read *Göel.* p. 201. l. 3. for
canst not, read *cannot.* p. 211. l. 2. for *where-ever*,
read *whenever.* p. 212. l. 27. for *our*, read *the.*
l. 29. for *are*, read *our.* p. 216. l. 8. read *Creature-*
Perfections. p. 235. l. 19. after *come;* read *to,*
l. 24. for *if*, read *of.*

Come, blessed Jesus, quickly come,
Unsmark the bright celestial way,
Within my Breast erect thy throne
Nor let me faint through long delay.

I'm weary of these earthly joys,
The world and all its flattering charm,
My heart wants after purer joys,
And Christ alone my bosom warms.

With coldness and contempt I view
These vain transitory scenes,
Since Christ hath form'd my soul anew
And wak'd me from Egyptian dreams.

Methinks a Ray of Heav'nly light
Already dwells upon my soul;
Methinks the promis'd Land is in sight
My Heart's the Needle, Christ the Bee.
What tho' for Pageantry and state
Others to Earthly Treasures trust
and aiming falsely to be great
Like the Vile Serpents click their dust.

My Heart, my Treasure, is my Best,
My all sufficiency above
The Kingdoms of the world possess'd
Are vain without my Saviour's love



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